ANTI-THEISTIC THEORIES

By

ROBERT FLINT

1877

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THE BAIRD LECTURE FOR 1877

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TO

The Memory of my Mother

I DEDICATE THIS VOLUME

IN SORROWFUL AND AFFECTIONATE REMEMBRANCE

OF HER LOVE AND VIRTUES

PREFATORY NOTE.

THE present volume is closely connected with the work entitled 'Theism,' which was published in 1877. The two works may be regarded as two parts of a system of Natural Theology which is still very far from complete.

The chief omission in the present volume relates to Agnosticism. The explanation of the omission is that the author was anxious to avoid, in a semi-popular work, abstruse metaphysical discussion, and has long cherished the hope of being able, at some future time, to publish a historical account and critical examination of the various phases of Modern Agnosticism.

He has again to thank Mr James A. Campbell of Stracathro for kindly assisting him in the work of revision.

JOHNSTONE LODGE, CRAIGMILLAR PARK,
EDINBURGH, *20th May* 1879.

PREFATORY NOTE TO FIFTH EDITION.

THE alterations in this edition are chiefly in the literary references. Lecture VII., and the Notes connected with it, have been left unchanged. They may be compared with the very elaborate examination of Sir John Lubbock's views on the atheism of savage peoples in G. Roskoff's 'Religionswesen der Rohesten Naturvölker,' a work published the year after the first edition of the present volume, and in which the results arrived at are precisely those which I had reached. Ample confirmation of these results will also be found in Paul Gloatz's 'Spekulative Theologie in Verbindung mit der Religionsgeschichte,' 1883-84; and in W. Schneider's 'Die Religion der Afrikanischen Naturvölker.' Among the many works which have appeared in recent years dealing with Theism and Anti-Theism, it is proper to mention the following — the 'Philosophical Basis of Theism' (1883), by Professor Samuel Harris of Yale; the 'Philosophy of Theism (1884), by the late Dr Ward; 'Modern Theories in Philosophy and Religion' (1885), by Principal Tulloch; 'Aspects of Theism' (1893), by Professor Knight; and 'Theism as grounded in Human Nature, historically and critically handled' (1893), by W. L. Davidson, LL.D.

JOHNSTONE LODGE, CRAIGMILLAR PARK,
EDINBURGH, *1st May* 1894.

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APPENDIX.

ANTI-THEISTIC THEORIES.

LECTURE I.

ATHEISM.

I.

IN the course of lectures which I delivered last year I endeavoured to show that theism was true; that there was an overwhelming weight of evidence in favour of the belief that the heavens and the earth and all that they contain owe their existence and continuance in existence to the wisdom and will of a supreme, self-existent, omnipotent, omniscient, righteous, and benevolent Being, who is distinct from, and independent of, what He has created. In the course which I have undertaken to deliver this year, I wish to subject to examination the theories which are opposed to theism, and I hope to be able to prove that they are essentially irrational and erroneous. When

engaged in the attempt to establish that theism has a broad and solid foundation both in fact and reason, I contented myself with simply warding off the attacks of those who deny that it has such a foundation. But obviously more than this may and should be done. It is our right and our duty to inquire also if those who reject and assail theism are themselves standing on firm ground, and if the systems which have been raised in hostility to theism are as impregnable as we have found itself to be. It is this right which I intend to exercise; it is this duty which I shall endeavour to perform.

In dealing with theories which have nothing in common except that they are antagonistic to theism, it is necessary to have a general term to designate them. Anti-theism appears to be the appropriate word. It is, of course, much more comprehensive in meaning than the term atheism. It applies to all systems which are opposed to theism. It includes, therefore, atheism. No system is so opposed to theism as atheism; it is the extreme form of opposition to it. But short of atheism there are anti-theistic theories. Polytheism is not atheism, for it does not deny that there is a Deity; but it is anti-theistic, since it denies that there is only one. Pantheism is not atheism, for it admits that there is a God; but it is anti-theism, for it denies that God is a Being distinct from creation and possessed of such attri-

butes as wisdom, and holiness, and love. Every theory which refuses to ascribe to God an attribute which is essential to a worthy conception of His character is anti-theistic. Only those theories which refuse to acknowledge that there is evidence even for the existence of a God are atheistic.[1]

An examination of anti-theistic theories ought evidently to begin with atheism,—the complete negation of theism. The term atheism, although much less general in signification than anti-theism, includes a multitude of systems. Atheism has a great variety of forms. Its advocates are by no means agreed among themselves. On the contrary, if their comparatively small number be taken into account, they are far more divided into sects than theists. They are at one only in their utter rejection of theism. I am not aware of any positive distinctive principle which atheists hold in common. As soon as they attempt to state a doctrine which may fill the place of theism, dissension breaks out among them at all points. It is an obvious consequence of the fact that atheism is thus indefinite, divided, and varied, that its chief phases must be discussed separately. It cannot be treated fairly by being treated as what it is not,—a single, self-consistent system. It is really a series or aggregation of discordant and conflicting systems. At the same time, some

[1] See Appendix I.

general remarks regarding it may not be without use.

Atheism is the rejection of belief in God. It teaches either that there is no God, or that it is impossible for man to know that there is a God, or that there is no sufficient reason for believing that there is a God. In other words, it either absolutely denies that there is a Divine Being; or it denies that the human mind is capable of discovering whether or not there is a Divine Being; or it simply maintains that no valid proof of the existence of a Divine Being has been produced. Atheism in the form of a denial of the existence of a God has been called dogmatic atheism; atheism in the form of doubt of man's ability to ascertain whether there is a God or not has been called sceptical atheism; atheism in the form of mere rejection of the evidence which has been presented for the existence of a God may be called critical atheism. There is no individual system of atheism, however, which is exclusively dogmatic, exclusively sceptical, or exclusively critical. These terms express accurately only ideal distinctions which have never been exactly realised. Sceptical atheism and critical atheism are inseparable. A purely dogmatic atheism would be utterly incredible. Sceptical atheism and critical atheism have always been much more prevalent than dogmatic atheism. In

every form — even in its most modest form — atheism pronounces all belief in God a delusion, and all religion a fable. What is called practical atheism is not a kind of thought or opinion, but a mode of life. It may coexist with a belief in the being of a God. It is the living as if there were no God, whether we believe that there is a God or not.

The existence of atheism has often been doubted. It has been held to be absolutely impossible for a man entirely to throw off belief in God. The thought of a universe without a creator, without a presiding mind and sustaining will, without a judge of right and wrong, has seemed to many to be so incredible that they have refused to admit that it could be sincerely entertained by the human mind. And it may be conceded that there is an element of truth underlying this view. The whole nature of man presupposes and demands God, and is an enigma and self-contradiction if there be no God. The reason of man can only rest in the Divine Reason as the first cause; his affections tend to a supreme good which can only be found in God; his conscience contains a moral law which implies a moral lawgiver. He can only be conscious of himself as dependent, finite, and imperfect, and consequently as distinguished from that which is absolute, infinite, and perfect. In this sense all theists will probably hold that the soul

bears within it a latent and implicit testimony against atheism and on behalf of theism; and the opinion is one which cannot be refuted otherwise than by what would amount to a refutation of theism itself. But although man's whole nature cries for God, and can only find its true life in God, there can be little doubt that he may so contradict himself, so violate the most essential principles of his own nature, as to persuade himself that there is no reason in the universe higher than his own, no good which is not earthly and perishable, no righteous judge, no infinite and eternal God. The number of those who have gone this length may not have been so large as it has sometimes been represented. Many have certainly been called atheists unjustly and calumniously. Some may possibly have professed themselves to be atheists who really professed a religious belief which they overlooked. But that there have been atheists—that there are atheists—cannot reasonably be denied. When men teach the most manifest and explicit atheism—when they avow themselves to be atheists—when they glory in the name—we must take them at their word. To say that they do not conscientiously believe what they teach is an assertion which no one has a right to make unless he can conclusively prove it, and for which there will be found in many cases no proof whatever. The strangest

and most monstrous beliefs can be conscientiously held by the weak and erring children of men. The absurdities of superstition make easily credible the sincerity of atheism. If one man can honestly believe that there are a thousand fantastic gods, another may honestly believe that there is no god. Without hesitation or reservation, therefore, I grant that Feuerbach fully meant what he said when he wrote, "There is no God; it is clear as the sun and as evident as the day that there is no God, and still more that there can be none;" Gustave Flourens when he penned these words, "Our enemy is God. Hatred of God is the beginning of wisdom. If mankind would make true progress, it must be on the basis of atheism;" and Mr Bradlaugh when he told his audience, "My friend Mr Holyoake says, with regard to the words infidelity and atheism, that he objects to them because of the opprobrium which has gathered round them. The people who fight for old nationalities remember the words of opprobrium that have been heaped on their country and their cause, but only to fight to redeem cause and country from that opprobrium. They do not admit the opprobrium to be deserved, but they fight to show that the whole is a lie. And I maintain the opprobrium cast upon the word atheism is a lie. I believe atheists as a body to be men deserving respect, and I do not care what kind of character religious

men may put round the word atheist. I would fight until men respect it." I know no reason for suspecting the sincerity of these men or of these statements, and therefore I do not suspect it.

There are open and avowed atheists whom we are bound to believe to be what they profess themselves to be. There are also some who disclaim atheism, yet who plainly teach it under other names. A large amount of the speculation which is called pantheistic might with equal propriety be called atheistic. Many materialists have repelled the charge of atheism, because they held matter to be endowed with eternal unchanging properties and powers; many positivists and secularists have fancied that they could not be properly called atheists because they did not undertake to prove that there is no God, but only to show that there is no reason for supposing that there is one; but, of course, belief in the eternity of matter and motion is not belief in the existence of God, and atheism is not only the belief that God's existence can be disproved, but also the belief that it cannot be proved. We have no desire to attach to any man a name which he dislikes, but a regard to truth forbids us to concede that atheism only exists where it is avowed.

Atheists have seldom undertaken to do more than to refute the reasons adduced in favour of belief in God. They have rarely pretended to

prove that there is no God ; they have maintained that the existence of God cannot be established, but not that His non-existence can be established; they have tried to justify their unbelief, but they have not sought to lay a foundation for disbelief. And the reason is obvious. It is proverbially difficult to prove a negative, and there can be no negative so difficult to prove as that there is no God. Were a man to be landed on an unknown island, the print of a foot, a shell, a feather, a scratch on the bark of a tree, the perforation or indentation or upheaval of a little earth, would be sufficient to show him that some living creature had been there; but he would require to traverse the whole island, and examine every nook and corner, every object and every inch of space in it, before he was entitled to affirm that no living creature had been there. The larger the territory to be traversed and examined, the more difficult would it necessarily be to show that it had not a single animal inhabitant. So to show that there is a God may be very easy, but to prove that there is certainly none must be extremely difficult, if not impossible. There may be as many witnesses to God's existence as there are creatures in the whole compass of heaven and earth, but before we can be sure that nothing testifies to His existence, we must know all things. The territory which has in this case to be surveyed and investigated is the

universe in all its length and breadth; it is eternal time and boundless space, with all the events which have occurred in time, and all the objects which occupy space. Before a man can be warranted to affirm that nowhere throughout all this territory is there any trace of God's existence, he must have seen it all and comprehended it all, which would require omnipresence and omniscience, or, in other words, would imply that he is himself God.

Foster and Chalmers have so admirably presented this argument in celebrated passages of their writings that it is unnecessary to dwell upon it further.[1] It has only been attempted to be refuted by an author who has fallen into singular mistakes as to its nature. Mr Holyoake fancies that it turns upon an arbitrary use of the words "denial" and "knowledge." There is not the slightest foundation for such a notion. The word denial, and even all the sentences which contain it, might be deleted without the argument losing a particle of its force. The word knowledge is employed in its ordinary and most general signification. The knowledge of the eyesight is no more demanded of the atheist for his negation than it is alleged by the theist for his affirmation. The whole argument turns simply on the manifest and indubitable difference between proving an affirma-

[1] See Appendix II.

tive and proving a negative. From that difference it follows necessarily that the inference that there is a God may be warranted by a very limited knowledge of nature, but that the inference that there is no God can only be warranted by a complete knowledge of nature. If the author mentioned had not thoroughly misconceived the character of the argument he would never have imagined that it could be thus refuted by inversion. "The wonder," he says, "turns on the great process by which a man could grow to the immense intelligence which can *know* that there *is* a God. What powers, what lights are requisite for *this* attainment! This intelligence involves the very attributes of Divinity, which must therefore be possessed by the theist while they are pretended to be sought. For unless this man is omnipresent, unless he is at this moment in every place in the universe, he cannot know but there may be, in some place, manifestations of nature independent of Deity, by which even *he* would be overpowered. If he does not know absolutely every agent in the universe, the one that he does not know may be the eternal source of all life. If he is not himself the chief agent in the universe, and does not know that God is so—that which is so may be the eternal and independent element which animates nature. If the theist is not in absolute possession of all the propositions which constitute universal truth, the one which he wants may be,

that nature is the primordial and sole existence. If he cannot with certainty assign the cause of all that he perceives to exist, that cause may be nature. If he does not know everything that has been done in the immeasurable ages that are past, some things may have been done by nature. Thus, unless the theist knows all things — that is, precludes all other independent existence by being the infinite existence himself—he does not know that the nature whose supremacy he rejects, does not self-subsist and act on its own eternal essence." Foster's argument is here travestied, but certainly not answered. Where is the wonder that men should know that there is a God ? Such knowledge must indeed be elevated and glorious, but it may well be within the reach of a feeble and limited intelligence. It implies a certain likeness to God, but none of the distinctive attributes of God. A single square foot of earth may contain numerous proofs that there is a God, but only the entire universe can furnish evidence that there is none. He who does not know absolutely every agent in the universe cannot be sure that the one of which he is ignorant may not be the eternal source of all life and thought, while the most familiar manifestations of life and thought may reasonably convince him that their eternal source cannot be dead and thoughtless matter. If the theist undertook to prove the non-existence of nature,—that there

are no natural causes and no effects produced by them,—he would venture on the same kind of task as that of the atheist who attempts to establish that there is no God, and his audacity might then be rebuked and his want of wisdom evinced by the same kind of reasoning. In that case refutation by inversion would be legitimate and conclusive; but it is clearly inapplicable in any other case. Before it can be employed some one must be found to maintain that there is no nature, which is the only proposition corresponding to there is no God. But no theist maintains the non-existence of nature. What he maintains is that nature is an effect whose cause is God.

If the argument of Foster and Chalmers be well founded, atheism ought certainly not to be a self-confident system. It can never be sure that there is no God, and can never have a right to deny that there is a God. It must simply affirm that theism has not been proved true, and must abandon the hope of ever proving it to be false. It must rest in a state of suspense and hesitation from which there is no probability of deliverance, unless by theism being proved true. It must never express itself more strongly than by such phrases as "there is no knowing whether there be a God or not,"—"there is no saying,"—"it doth not yet appear." Is this not a very strange and dreary condition for the human mind to be condemned

to abide in? If such be the natural condition of the human mind, must not the constitution both of the mind and of the universe in relation to the mind be about the worst conceivable? But is it not much more likely that atheists have deceived themselves, than that either the mind or the universe has been so badly made as atheism implies? Is it not much more likely that atheism is false, than that the human mind has been made not for truth, but for doubt?

To deny that God can be known is scarcely less presumptuous than to deny that God is. For, it will be observed, it assumes that we are capable of describing the limits both of human attainment and of Divine power. It assumes that we are not only able to say here is a proposition which the human mind can never ascertain to be true, but also here is a proposition which cannot be revealed to be true even by an infinite mind, supposing such a mind to exist. It assumes, that is to say, in the first place, a kind of knowledge of the human mind such as no man has got. We can discover the conditions and laws to which reasoning and research must be conformed if the human mind would attain truth; but we cannot ascertain the external limits of intellectual progress. To lay down that this or that proposition, which involves in itself no contradiction, can never be known, never be proved, is sheer dogmatism. The

mind has no right to assign fixed limits to its own advancement in knowledge; it has no warrant even for doubting that it may advance for ever, its horizon constantly receding, its range of vision growing always wider and more distinct. When the atheist declares, therefore, that God cannot be known, he dogmatises presumptuously as to the limits of human power; he arrogates to himself a superhuman knowledge of the possible attainments of the human mind. But worse than this, while denying that an infinite mind can ever be known, he assumes that he himself knows what an infinite mind would be capable of. He tells us in one breath that we can never know even the existence of an almighty Being, and in the next that he himself knows what such a Being could not do; that he knows that God could not make His existence known to us. Under the apparent humility of the declaration God cannot be known, there lurks the affirmation that a finite mind can trace the limits of infinite power. Therefore, I say, to deny that God can be known is scarcely less presumptuous than to deny that God is. It implies in him who makes the denial the possession of a Divine attribute—the possession of infinite knowledge.

The atheist, then, who would not virtually declare himself to be a god, must not venture to deny either that God is or that God can be known,

but must be content merely to deny the sufficiency of the evidence for God's existence. He must be content to be a mere critic; he is bound to confess that atheism is really no theory or explanation of the universe; that no positive or independent or scientific proof of it need be looked for; and that facts sufficient to overthrow it may be brought to light any instant. Atheists are, however, seldom thus diffident, and we cannot wonder that they are not. There are very few minds which could acquiesce in a hopeless and inexplicable hesitancy and suspense. Atheism would make no converts unless it showed more confidence than it is rationally entitled to do.

Not unfrequently it displays great confidence. Thus Von Holbach, in the 'System of Nature,' tells his readers that the existence of God is "not a problem, but simply an impossibility." But for this strong statement he had only the weak reason that "we cannot know God truly unless we are God." We have just seen that to know there is no God, or that God cannot be known, implies such knowledge as only a God can have, but that only a very little knowledge may suffice reasonably to convince us that there is a God. Feuerbach, as I have already mentioned, declares it "clear as the sun and as evident as the day, not only that there is no God, but that there can be none." We seek in vain, however, for the demon-

stration of this startling assertion. In its place there is presented to us an unreasoned and superficial hypothesis as to the origin, nature, and history of religion. Religion, in Feuerbach's opinion, is self-delusion in the form of self-deification. It is his own nature which man projects out of himself, personifies, and worships. He idealises himself, believes the ideal real, and adores the imaginary being whom he has created. Religion is thus a phase of insanity under which the whole human race laboured for thousands of years, until the one wise man appeared who discovered that his fellow-men had been idiotically bowing and cringing before their own shadow. It is this discovery which makes it "clear as the sun and evident as the day, not only that there is no God, but that there can be none." Mainländer claims, in his painfully gloomy work, to have for the first time founded atheism on a scientific basis. But to accomplish his task he finds it necessary to represent Christianity as, like Budhism, a system of atheism. Maintaining the atheism of these two religions, he infers that atheism is the natural goal of human development. The mass of assertions which he accumulates around this ludicrous argument he assures us is a scientific demonstration. Czolbe, Dühring, and some other German atheists, might be referred to as equally audacious in profession and feeble in performance. A zealous English

advocate of atheism, Mr Bradlaugh, has frequently said, "If God is defined to mean an existence other than the existence of which I am a mode, then I deny God, and affirm that it is impossible God can be. That is, I affirm one existence, and deny that there can be more than one." But the terms "existence" and "mode" are here employed in so peculiar and equivocal a manner that the declaration may have either a theistic, pantheistic, or atheistic meaning. It has no proper or definite meaning.

Atheism is essentially irrational when not merely critical. And even when merely critical it is not very rational. This statement is based on the entire argumentation in the previous course of lectures. The chief aim of that course was to exhibit the evidence for the existence of God, and the proof of theism is necessarily the refutation of atheism. Further, a secondary aim, kept in view throughout, was directly to repel the objections which atheism has brought against the validity and sufficiency of the fundamental theistic proofs; to show that their weight is scarcely appreciable when fairly poised against the reasons in the opposite scale, and that, almost without exception, the subtlest and most plausible of them indicate only defects or difficulties in the metaphysics of religious speculation, and should have no influence whatever on the practical decision, at which the

mind ought to arrive, as to whether there is a God or not. If I succeeded in doing so I must, of course, have refuted the atheism which rests on these objections, — the atheism which is purely critical. But whether I succeeded or not, it will be better now to offer some general considerations on atheism in its intellectual, emotional, and moral aspects, than to return on what has been already done, or at least, on what has been already tried to be done.[1]

II.

How does atheism satisfy the intellect? There is around us a world of order and beauty; a world in which elements are wonderfully compounded and qualities wonderfully associated — in which there is at once an admirable regularity and an admirable diversity — in which all things work together. What explanation does atheism give of this world? There is an atheism which does not pretend to give any explanation; which tells us even that there is no explanation to be given, and that it is foolish to ask for any. This kind of atheism, to be consistent, ought to forbid all investigation whatever; ought to lay an arrest on thought and research at the very outset of their course; ought to explain nothing; ought not to recognise that there is any such thing as law and

[1] See Appendix III.

order. This kind of atheism is a direct and complete violation of the rational principle in man. The human intellect is by its very constitution compelled to seek first causes for events, and final causes for order and adaptation; and it has no right to stop short, as the atheist would have it, when it cannot advance farther without rising to the apprehension of a Creative Reason. If it will not go as far as its principles legitimately lead, it has no right to start at all; it must deny itself entirely; it must wholly renounce its own nature. In other words, a brute may, but a man cannot, be a consistent atheist of this class. Pure empiricism is so far beneath humanity as to be beyond its reach, and can support nothing either human or rational.

There is an atheism which teaches that the world is but the last effect of an eternal succession of causes and effects, and that there has been no first cause. The mind, however, rejects as absolutely absurd the notion of an eternal series of worlds which depends on no originating principle. It demands a first cause, a true and self-existent first cause. A series may be indefinitely extensible; it cannot be infinitely extended. Where there is a last term there must have been a first term. If each of a series of effects be dependent, all the effects of that series must be dependent, and on a cause which precedes them. If the last link of a

chain be supported by the link above it, that by the third link, the third by the fourth, and so on, the entire chain cannot hang upon nothing. An endless adjournment of causes is a process which is meaningless and useless, and in which reason can never acquiesce. For reason to abandon belief in a self-existent eternal cause for belief in an eternal series, every part of which is the effect of an antecedent cause, while the whole is an effect without a cause, is a suicidal, a self-destructive act. Besides, the supposition of the eternity of the series of worlds obviously cannot free us from the necessity of believing in an eternally operative intelligence to account for the order, the mechanical and organic adjustments, the finite minds, &c., to be found in these worlds. The conviction which a man feels when looking at St Paul's that it must have had an architect of wonderful genius, is not disturbed or lessened by his knowledge that it was built two centuries ago. And in like manner, the inference that the world must have had an intelligent cause ought to be as legitimate and strong were it eternal, or the last of an eternal series, as if it were the only world and had been created four thousand years or four days ago. The inference from order and adjustment to intelligence is unaffected by the consideration of time; it is valid for all time, and for eternity as well as for time. The eternity of the series of worlds supposed can

be no evidence that it is uncaused by intelligence; it can only entitle us to affirm that if the series have a cause, the cause must be eternal, since the effect is eternal. The hypothesis of an eternal series of worlds is thus an utterly vain and unreasonable device; a most futile attempt to evade the obligation of belief in God.

There is an atheism which teaches us that matter and its laws account for all the harmonies and utilities of nature, for all the faculties and aspirations of the human soul, and for the progress of history. But this form of atheism also, popular although it be, fails to establish any of its pretensions. It neither accounts for matter and its laws nor shows that they do not require to be accounted for. It assumes the self-existence of matter and its laws, although theism founding on science undertakes to show that they must have had an origin. The basis of this atheism is therefore a manifest *petitio principii*. And, even with its initial assumption, it does not explain the harmonies of the physical universe, nor the properties of vegetable and animal life, nor the mind of man, nor his moral principles and religious convictions. It puts what is lowest and most imperfect first, what is highest and most perfect last. It regards this contradiction of all rational thinking as a grand achievement.

There is an atheism, incredible as it may sound

which teaches that the universe, with all its objects and laws, is the creation of the finite human mind. What we call outward things are, according to this hypothesis, but mental states. All that is is *ego;* is the self-acting of itself and limiting itself, and so producing the *non-ego* or universe. Such is the doctrine on which a kind of atheism has been founded, which has sometimes received the name of autotheism, seeing that it would make man his own God and the creator of the heavens and earth. The celebrated Fichte was, at a certain stage of his philosophical career, accused of atheism in this form. He was supposed to teach a purely subjective idealism which would have been irreconcilable with any worthier religious theory; to maintain that the moral order of the universe which he identified with God was, like the universe itself, the creation of the personal *ego.* But he indignantly repelled the charge and denied that he had ever confounded the personal with the absolute *ego,* or taught a purely subjective idealism, or overlooked that development is inexplicable without belief in an immutable Being; and although the view generally given of his philosophy is inconsistent with these exculpatory statements, I believe that they must be accepted. It is admitted on all hands that, later in life, this noble-minded man was neither subjective idealist nor autotheist. Schopenhauer and others do not hesitate to tell

us that within the mind, some of them expressly say within the brain, of man, the immensities of time and space and all their contents lie enclosed; in Schopenhauer's own language, "did not human brains, objects scarcely as big as a large fruit, sprout up incessantly, like mushrooms, the world would sink into nothingness." This strange hypothesis finds a strange counterpart in the speculations of two of the latest of German atheists as to the magnitude of the brain. Schopenhauer thought it no bigger than it seemed to be, and yet supposed that it contained the universe. Czolbe and Ueberweg fancy that its apparent size is but an extremely diminished picture of its real size; that, in fact, it is colossal, stretching beyond the fixed stars, and covering the whole field of vision. Certainly either the universe would require to be much smaller than it is, or the mind of man much greater than it is, before the notion that the latter is the source or cause of the former can be for a moment entertained. The atheism which makes the finite mind the creator and sustainer of the universe is its own best refutation.

Atheism, then, yields no satisfaction to the reason, but is in all its forms a violation of the conditions of rational belief. Does it satisfy better the demands of the heart? The atheist is without God in the world, and therefore has only the world. Will the world without God satisfy a

human heart? No man will venture to maintain that material things and outward advantages—meat and drink and raiment, wealth, honours, influence—can satisfy it. The heart of man—the atheist himself, if he be a person of any refinement and elevation of character, will grant at once—cannot be content with merely material and earthly good; it must have something which responds to higher faculties than the sensuous and the selfish. It would be to insult the atheist to suppose him even to doubt this. What he will say is that although without God there remains to him truth, beauty, and virtue, and that these things will yield to him such satisfaction as his nature admits of, and one of which he needs not be ashamed. Let us see.

The truth in which the atheist must seek the satisfaction of his heart can only be, of course, mere truth,—truth apprehended not as expressive of the thought and affection and will of God, but as expressive of the properties and relations of material things and human beings. Suppose, however, that a man knew not only all that science has at present to tell, but all that it will ever be able to tell about the world of matter and the mind of man and human history, would it be reasonable to expect this fully to satisfy him? I think not. Were all that is to be known about the material universe actually known, the man who

knew it would simply have within himself the true reflection of what was existing without him; on his spirit which thinks there would simply be a correct picture of that which does not think. But the soul which would not be satisfied with the very world itself, could it have it, will surely not be satisfied with that pale reflection of it which constitutes science. The soul which is itself so superior every way to the world cannot have for its highest end merely to serve as a mirror to it, and to show forth not the likeness and glory of God, but of what is without life, without reason, and without love. And were all that is to be known about the mind of man actually known, the soul which knew it would only have a knowledge of itself. But could any person except a fool rest in complacent contemplation of himself? True self-knowledge is very much the reverse of pleasant or satisfying. Shame and terror are often its most natural effects. Science, culture, truth, when separated from their one eternal source in the Infinite Life, the Infinite Love, show us nothing higher than our own poor selves—nothing that we can look up to—no object of trust, of adoration, of affection. How, then, can they satisfy hearts the true life of which consists in the exercise of faith and hope, reverence and love? Severed from what will worthily develop the higher emotional principles of human nature,

they may lead the soul into a land as waste and famishing as what only concerns the body, or even into a still more howling and hungry wilderness. The spiritual affections if denied appropriate sustenance, if presented only with purely intellectual truth, will either die of inanition to the sore impoverishment of the mind, or they will live on to torment it with a pain more grievous than that of unappeased animal appetite. For true it is, as an eloquent preacher has said, in words which I cannot exactly recall, but which are nearly as follows: "There is on earth a greater misfortune than to crave for bread and not to have it, and a sadness more complete than that of bereavement, sickness, poverty, even pushed to their extremest limits; there is the bitterness of a soul which has studied, and searched, and speculated, which has pursued with eager and anxious heart, truth in many directions, and yet, because it sought it away from the light and life which are in God, has only found in all directions doubt and nothingness."

What we cannot find in truth, however, may we not find in the enjoyment of the beautiful in nature and art? In his last work—'The Old and the New Faith'—this is what Strauss points to as a substitute for religion. The admiration of fair scenery, of painting, music, and poetry, may, it is hoped, fill the void in the heart caused by the

absence of faith in God. The picture-gallery, the concert-room, the theatre, may help us to dispense with the Church and its services. Now, certainly, it is greatly to be desired that the love of the beautiful in nature and art were more widely diffused among all classes of the community. He who contributes to its cultivation and extension confers on his fellow-men no mean boon, no slight service. But so far from being able to supply the place of the love of God, the love of the beautiful itself withers and corrupts, becomes weak or becomes foul, severed from that love. Art of a high and healthy order has ever drawn its inspiration largely from religion. The grandest buildings, the most beautiful paintings, the noblest music, the greatest poems, are religious. The arts have hitherto spread and advanced in the service of religion, or at least in connection with it. They have never flourished except in a spiritual atmosphere which is the breath of religious faith Atheism — unbelief — has, alike in ancient and in modern times, and in all lands, been found fatal to art. Before it is entitled to point us to art as a substitute for religion, it must be able to show us where there is an art which can elevate and improve the mind that has not been directly or indirectly engendered by religion. It must show us that it can create and sustain a noble art. Atheistical art, so far as the world has yet known

it, has been art of a diseased and degrading kind. It need scarcely be added that art, whether good or bad, can never be more for the majority of men than a source of comparatively rare, fragmentary, and temporary enjoyment. It is for the leisure hour and for the lighter moods and occasions of life; not for times either of heavy toil or heavy trial. It were well that hard-working men valued art more generally and highly than they do, and so enjoyed such power as it possesses,—a real and precious power of its kind,—to refresh those who are weary, and to soothe those who are troubled; but it were ill that they abandoned for it religion. Art is a beautiful flower, but religion is a strong staff. Art is a sweet perfume, but religion is necessary sustenance. Without aid from art the spirit will lack many a charm, but without aid from religion it will lack life itself.

It is said that nature lies open to the inspection and contemplation of all, and presents the same beauties and sublimities to the atheist as to the theist? It must be answered that the atheist and the theist, so far as they are thoughtful and self-consistent men, cannot but view nature very differently and feel very differently towards it. To the atheist nature may be beautiful and sublime, but it must be, above all, terrible. Nature stands to him in place of Deity, but is the mere embodiment of force, the god of the iron foot, without ear

for prayer, or heart for sympathy, or arm for help. It is immense, it is sublime, it sparkles with beauties, but it is senseless, aimless, pitiless. It is an interminable succession of causes and effects, with no reason or love as either their beginning or end ; it is an unlimited ocean of restlessness and change, the waves of which heave and moan, under the influence of necessity, in darkness for evermore; it is an enormous mechanism, driving and grinding on of itself from age to age, but towards no goal and for no good. Says Strauss himself, " In the enormous machine of the universe, amid the incessant whirl and hiss of its jagged iron wheels—amid the deafening crash of its ponderous stamps and hammers—in the midst of this terrific commotion, man, a helpless and defenceless creature, finds himself placed—not secure for a moment, that on some unguarded motion, a wheel may not seize and rend him, or a hammer crush him to powder. This sense of abandonment is at first very awful." And we may add, the longer it is realised it should grow more and more awful, ever deeper, denser, and darker, until the atheist feels that for him to talk of heartily enjoying nature were a cruel mockery of his own helplessness. We can only be rationally free to enjoy nature when we have confidence that one hand of an almighty Father is working the mechanism of the universe and another guiding His children in the midst of

it, so that neither wheel nor hammer shall injure one hair of their heads.

When truth and beauty fail, will the atheist find his virtue suffice? Will morality, when exclusive of service to God, when separated from the thought of God, satisfy and sustain the human heart? Does atheism meet the claims and supply the wants of conscience? This is to ask, in other words, if a man will be as strong for duty without as with belief in an almighty and perfect moral Judge and Governor? And the question is surely one which answers itself. The believer in God has every motive to virtue which the unbeliever has, and he has his belief in addition, which is the mightiest motive of all. It is often hard enough even for the believing man to conquer his passions, to bear the burden which Providence imposes, and to be valiant for the right against wrong; but how much harder must it be for the unbeliever? His evil desires are not checked by the feeling that Infinite Justice beholds them and condemns, nor are his strivings after God sustained by the consciousness that the Almighty and All-merciful approves and favours them. When he sees falsehood widely triumphant over truth, vice over virtue, he has no right to expect that it will ever be otherwise. If the highest wisdom and goodness in existence are man's own, the mystery is not that the world is so bad as it is, but that it is

not indescribably worse. When sickness and loss come to the atheist they may be patiently and bravely borne, but they cannot be welcomed as they may by one who feels that they are sent to him by supreme wisdom and love to purify and discipline his character, and to work out in him and for him an exceeding weight of glory. It is not for him to say—

> "Oh! there is never sorrow of heart
> That shall lack a timely end,
> If but to God we turn, and ask
> Of Him to be our friend!"

And what can he say in its stead? When death enters his home and strikes down some dear one, he hears no Father's voice, sees no Father's hand, feels no consolation of a comforting Spirit, but sits, in a darkness which is unrelieved by a single ray of light, mourning over the work of the senseless energies of nature. When death lays hold of himself, and he knows that there is no escape, he can only yield himself up to a dread uncertainty, or to the cold comfort of annihilation, the hope of being dissolved into the elements of which he was at first compounded—earth to earth, ashes to ashes; mind and heart as well as body to ashes—thoughts, affections, virtue to ashes; all, dust to dust. Is there much encouragement to virtue there?

The atheist may reply, I take from life no moral support which it really possesses; I do not remove

God from the world, but find the world without God, and I cannot rest my confidence on what seems to me to be a fiction. He may urge, also, that truth must be accepted, whether it appear to us to be all that is morally desirable or not. But one who answers thus cannot have understood the tenor of what we have advanced. If the atheist be right, of course it is not he who takes from life any hope, or strength, or charm which truly belongs to it. That truth must be accepted, whether sweet or bitter, consoling or desolating, is what no one doubts. But the question is, Can truth and goodness be at variance with one another? Can the belief of falsehood be more favourable to the moral perfection of mankind than the belief of truth? The most intrepid lover of truth may well hesitate before he answers in the affirmative. It is probably, indeed, impossible to show on atheistical principles why reason and virtue should not be in antagonism—why falsehood, if believed, should not be more conducive in many cases to virtue and happiness than truth; but the conclusion is none the less one which must seem perfectly monstrous to any mind which is not grievously perverted either intellectually or morally. If it were accepted, mental life could have no unity or harmony. For who could decide between the competing and conflicting claims of truth and virtue, of reason and morality? Neither

the truth unfavourable to morality nor the morality capable of being injured by truth would deserve, or could be expected to receive, the homage due to truth and morality when allied and accordant.

Atheism has not unfrequently been advocated on political grounds. Religion has been presented as the support of tyranny and the cause of strife. Its abolition, it has been argued, would emancipate the mind and secure peace. This view will always be found to rest on the confusion of religion with superstition. But superstition is as distinct from religion as from atheism. Superstition and atheism are both contraries to religion, and, as was long ago remarked, are closely akin. They are related to religion as the alternating feverish heat and shivering cold of bodily disease are related to the equable temperature of health. The one gives rise to the other; the one easily passes into the other. Each is to a large extent chargeable, not only with the evils which it directly produces, but with those which it originates by way of reaction. Both flow from ignorance and erroneous views of Divine things. "The atheist," as Plutarch tells us, "thinks that there is no God; the superstitious man would fain think so, but believes against his will, for he fears to do otherwise. Superstition generates atheism, and afterwards furnishes it with an apology, which, although neither true nor lovely, yet lacks not a specious pretence." On the

other hand, atheism drives men into superstition. Wherever it spreads, religious credulity and servility spread along with it, or spring up rapidly after it. A reasonable religion is the only effective barrier against either atheism or superstition.

It has been disputed whether atheism or superstition be politically the more injurious. Perhaps the problem is too vague to be resolved. But certainly the spread of atheism in a land may well be regarded with the most serious alarm. In the measure that a people ceases to believe in God and an eternal world, it must become debased, disorganised, and incapable of achieving noble deeds. History confirms this on many a page. "All epochs," wrote Goethe, "in which faith, under whatever form, has prevailed, have been brilliant, heart-elevating, and fruitful, both to contemporaries and posterity. All epochs, on the contrary, in which unbelief, under whatever form, has maintained a sad supremacy, even if for the moment they glitter with a false splendour, vanish from the memory of posterity, because none care to torment themselves with the knowledge of that which has been barren."

"The idea of an intelligent First Cause," says Mazzini, "once destroyed, — the existence of a moral law, supreme over men, and constituting an obligation, a duty imposed upon all men, is destroyed with it; so also all possibility of a law

of progress, or intelligent design, regulating the life of humanity. Both progress and morality then become mere transitory *facts*, having no deeper source than the tendency or impulse of individual organisation; no other sanction than the arbitrary will or varying interest of individuals, or — force. In fact, the only imaginable sources of life are — God, chance, or the blind, insuperable force of things; and if we deny the first to accept either of the others, in the name of whom, or of what, can we assume any right to educate? In the name of whom, or of what, can we condemn the man who abandons the pursuit of the general good through egotism? In the name of whom, or of what, can you protest against injustice, or assert your duty and right of contending against it? Whence can you deduce the existence of an aim common to all men, and therefore giving you an authority to declare to them that they are bound by duty to fraternal association in pursuit of that common aim?"

The prevalence of atheism in any land must bring with it national decay and disaster. Its triumph in our land would bring with it, I believe, hopeless national ruin. If the workmen of the large towns of this country were, as a body, to adopt the principles which have at certain periods swayed the minds of the workmen of Paris and

Lyons,—were as a body to adopt atheism and its concomitant beliefs,—utter anarchy would be inevitable. In such a case, owing to the very prosperity we have reached, and the consequent extreme concentration of population within a narrow circuit, the problem of government would be a hundredfold more difficult in England than it has been in France and Germany even in their darkest days. But no man who examines the signs of the times can fail to see much tending to show that atheism may possibly come to have its day of fatal supremacy. Polytheism there is nothing to fear from. Pantheism, except in forms in which it is hardly distinguishable from atheism, there is comparatively little to fear from. It is improbable that this country will be afflicted to any great extent with a fever of idealistic pantheism resembling that which Germany has passed through. What chiefly threatens us is atheism in the forms of agnosticism, positivism, secularism, materialism, &c.; and it does so directly and seriously. The most influential authorities in science and philosophy, and a host of the most popular representatives of literature, are strenuously propagating it. Through the periodical press it exerts a formidable power. It has in our large centres of population missionaries who, I fear, are better qualified for their work than many of those whom our Churches send forth to advocate to the same classes

the cause of Christianity. There is a great deal in current modes of thought and feeling, and in the whole constitution and character of contemporary society, to favour its progress. Atheism is a foe opposition to which, and to what tends to produce it, ought to draw together into earnest co-operation all who believe in God and love their country.[1]

[1] See Appendix IV.

LECTURE II.

ANCIENT MATERIALISM.

I.

IN the present day there is no kind of anti-theism, no kind of atheism, so prevalent and so formidable as materialism. Wherever we find just now an anti-theistic or atheistic system popular, we may be certain that it is either a form of materialism or that it has originated in materialism, and draws from it its life and support. It is necessary for us, therefore, to turn our attention to materialism, the chief and central source of contemporary anti-theistic speculations. I shall treat of it at some length, owing to its importance, but I shall treat of it only in so far as it is anti-theistic. It has other aspects and relations, but these I do not require to consider. With much that has sometimes been included in materialism, I have fortunately here no concern.

Materialists have not unfrequently sought to

represent the history of physical science and speculation as inseparable from, if not identical with, the history of materialism. Their right to do so is, of course, denied by all their opponents. Spiritualists of every class maintain that nothing accomplished by physical science has carried us by a single step nearer materialism. All consistent theists believe that the progress of physical science has been a continuous illustration of the power, wisdom, and goodness of God. Materialism cannot be allowed, therefore, quietly and illogically to take for granted that the interests of physical science are specially bound up with its own. At the same time it may be acknowledged, and I desire to acknowledge it cordially, that materialism and materialistic theories have largely contributed to the advancement of physical science, and have indirectly profited even mental science. It would be altogether unjust to regard them as merely hurtful or merely useless. They have suggested and stimulated the most varied researches. It is no accidental circumstance that they have abounded during every age in which physical science has been prosecuted with vigour and success. Wherever physical science is generally enterprising it must also be often audacious. If it were never unreasonably hopeful and ambitious, its achievements would be comparatively few and mean. The material universe can be

under-estimated as well as over-estimated, and the exaggerations even of materialism are needful to secure its being estimated aright. It was Coleridge, I think, who, when asked what could be the use of the stars if not inhabited, replied that it might be to show that dirt was cheap. The theologians, the metaphysicians, the moral philosophers, and large classes of religionists have always been prone to regard matter as merely "dirt," and to forget that it is the wonderful work and glorious manifestation of God ; and so long as this error is committed, the opposite error may serve a providential purpose. Ignorance of physical nature, or injustice to it, is fatal even to philosophy and theology. There was very little materialism during the middle ages ; but at that time, also, physical science languished and died, and the philosophical theology which prevailed dogmatised, in consequence, so confidently and foolishly on the origin and nature of the universe and its relations to the Creator, that the grandest truths were discredited by being associated with the most ridiculous blunders.

There is a prevalent notion that materialism is at least a very definite theory which, whether true or false, cannot be mistaken for any other. In reality it is a general term which has many and discordant applications, and which comprehends a crowd of heterogeneous theories. There are sys-

tems which may with equal right be designated materialistic or pantheistic, and even materialistic or idealistic. The only kind of system of which history supplies no record is one which would answer truly to the name of materialism. The name would naturally denote a theory which explains the universe by what is known as matter, or by matter as known through ordinary observation or scientific investigation. There neither is, however, nor ever has been, any such theory. It is a universal characteristic of materialism that it supposes matter to be more than it is known to be; that it imaginatively exalts and glorifies matter beyond what sense or science warrants. It always attributes to matter eternity and self-existence; sometimes it supposes it to be likewise essentially active; sometimes it endows it with life, with sensation, with volition, with intelligence. Systems which agree in verbally representing matter as the foundation and explanation of the universe, differ enormously as to what matter is, but they all, without exception, ascribe to matter properties of which experience teaches us nothing.

It is perhaps impossible to fix precisely where the history of materialism begins. To say that it is "as old but not older than philosophy," is to say nothing, unless you say how old philosophy is. But philosophy existed in union with religion long before it existed in a state of independence, and

for anything we know to the contrary, may be as old as human reason itself. Notwithstanding the prevalence of the contrary opinion, there is evidence that even the lowest forms of religion have originated in a speculative impulse. They are not mere embodiments of the feelings of fear, or love, or dependence, but consist in great part of rude speculations, strange fancies, as to the making and the meaning of nature and of man. The ruder tribes of men seem unable to conceive either of mere matter or mere spirit; they spiritualise matter and materialise spirit; souls and gods are supposed by them to be material beings, and material things to have souls and divine powers; they cannot think of matter and spirit as separate existences. Fetichism, animism, animal-worship, nature-worship, have all their root in this mental incapacity. All these forms of religion may with almost as much propriety be called materialistic as the professedly materialistic theories of the recent speculators who, in the name of science, ascribe life and sense and other potencies even to the ultimate elements of matter. The feeble power of abstraction which characterises uncultured man has always made him, to a considerable extent, a materialist. He has been unable to think of mind and matter apart; of a body without spirit or spirit without body; of nature without God or God without nature. Man

has been unable until comparatively late times either to raise or answer the question, Was mind before matter or matter before mind? The Jews seem to have been the first nation raised above such materialism, and raised also, in consequence, above pantheism to a true theism. It is the Bible which has impressed on the human mind the great thought of the creation of matter by the will, the word of God.

The rude religious materialism now referred to is, of course, a very different thing from a speculative anti-religious materialism, but it explains why, as soon as speculation appeared and assumed an anti-religious attitude, it should have presented itself in the form of materialism. In spite of all that has been said against speculation, however, it is not the rule, it is only the exception, for it to be anti-religious; it is not the rule, but only the exception, for it to lead to materialism. The tendency of speculation, of refined and disciplined reflection of thought which seeks really to comprehend what it has before it, is, if history may be credited, to get beyond matter, not to rest in it. The history of materialism impartially written is not a very brilliant one. Comparatively few of the world's greatest thinkers have been adherents of this system. Its advocates have often done it little credit.[1]

In China, more than three hundred years before

[1] See Appendix V.

the Christian era, an avowedly atheistical materialism was widely prevalent. It was the chief task in life of one of the most celebrated Chinese philosophers, Meng-tseu, better known in the West as Mencius, to combat this doctrine, and the views of man's duty and destiny which were based on it. He believed it to have caused a vast amount of harm to his country, and that no society could long exist which entertained it. A few lines from an essay of one of the men whose teaching he strove to counteract will probably be sufficient to convince you that he was not far wrong. Yang Choo said, "Wherein people differ is the matter of life; wherein they agree is death. While they are alive we have the distinctions of intelligence and stupidity, honourableness and meanness; when they are dead we have so much rottenness decaying away,—this is the common lot. Yet intelligence and stupidity, honourableness and meanness, are not in one's power; neither is that condition of putridity, decay, and utter disappearance. A man's life is not in his own hands, nor is his death; his intelligence is not his own, nor is his stupidity, nor his honourableness, nor his meanness. All are born and all die;—the intelligent and the stupid, the honourable and the mean. At ten years old some die; at a hundred years old some die. The virtuous and the sage die; the ruffian and the fool also die. Alive,

they were Yaou and Shun, the most virtuous of men; dead, they are so much rotten bone. Alive, they were Klëe and Chow, the most wicked of men; dead, they are so much rotten bone. Who could know any difference between their rotten bones? While alive, therefore, let us hasten to make the best of life. When about to die, let us treat the thing with indifference and endure it; and seeking to accomplish our departure, so abandon ourselves to annihilation."

Plainer language than this there could not be. The whole essay is of the same character and tenor. Its author was avowedly without God and without hope in the world. He thought human beings were mere combinations of particles of dust, and would dissolve into particles of dust again. He saw that however differently men lived, their common lot was death; and he fancied that after death there was nothing left but "rotten bone." A man lives virtuously, but if he is unhappy all through life, as the virtuous often are, his virtue would seem, since there is no future world, to have done him no good. You may praise him after he is dead, but that is no more to him than to the trunk of a tree or a clod of earth. Or he may live what is called a vicious life, but if he have thereby the joy of gratifying his desires, any blame you may give him after he is dead will not take away from the reality of his

enjoyment. Blame is to the bad man, after death, like praise to the good man—as worthless as it is to the trunk of a tree or a clod of earth. Fame, therefore, according to Yang Choo, is but a phantom, virtue is but a delusion, and enjoyment has alone some reality and good in it. Hence he advises men not to care for praise or blame, virtue or vice, except as a means of enjoyment; to seek merely to make themselves as happy as they can while happiness is within their reach; to eat and drink, for to-morrow they die. That is one of the oldest systems of ethical materialism and of materialistic ethics. It is a very simple theory, and to the vast majority of men it will seem a very consistent theory. A few exceptionally constituted natures may combine a materialistic creed with generous and self-denying conduct, but the ordinary man of all lands and ages will find in a materialism which denies God and a future life the justification of sensuality and selfishness.[1]

None of the greater systems of Hindu philosophy can be properly classed as materialistic; but among the minor systems there is one—the Charvāka philosophy—closely akin to that just described. It assumes that perception by the senses is the only source of true knowledge. It maintains that the four elements of earth, air, fire, and water, are the original principles of all things,

[1] See Appendix VI.

and that they are eternal. It represents intelligence as resulting from a modification of the aggregate of these elements, when combined and transformed into the human body, just as the power of inebriation is produced by the mixing of certain ingredients. The faculty of thought, according to it, is destroyed when the elements from which it arises are dissolved. There is no soul apart from the body: the soul is only the body distinguished by the attribute of intelligence. The various phenomena of the world are produced spontaneously from the inherent nature of things, and there is nothing supernatural — no God, no fate even, no other world, no final liberation, no recompense for acts. Prosperity is heaven and adversity is hell, and there is no other heaven or hell. The so-called sacred books—the three Vedas —were composed by rogues or buffoons. The exercises of religion and the practices of asceticism are merely a means of livelihood for men devoid of intellect and manliness. The sole end — the only reasonable end—of man is enjoyment:—

> "While life remains let a man live happily, let him feed on ghee, even though he runs in debt;
> When once the body becomes ashes, how can it ever return again?"

That, so far as I know, is the only system of thorough materialism among the philosophies of India. And certainly, in one sense, it is as thorough as can be imagined. It shows no reverence

for any kind of authority or tradition—no deference to respectability or public opinion. It recoils from no consequence of its principles. At the same time, it is manifestly a very poor and ignoble kind of philosophy. It is the theory of men who wish to dispense with all thoughts of God and of a moral government, in order that they may feel free to indulge in a selfish and sensuous life.[1]

II.

Philosophy began its wonderful career in Greece by attempting to resolve all the phenomena of the universe into a single material first principle, such as water, or air, or fire; or rather, it began by conjecturing how all things might have been evolved from such a principle. And yet it was not merely materialistic, for matter was supposed to be filled by other than material powers—by spontaneity, by life, by intelligence. The first system of Greek materialism, properly so called, was that wrought out by Leucippus, and especially by Democritus, in the fifth century before Christ. The materialism of the present day is substantially the materialism of Democritus. This explains why some recent German writers, favourable to materialism, have extolled Democritus as a speculative and scientific genius of the very highest

[1] See Appendix VII.

order, equal or superior to Plato and Aristotle. For such an opinion the fragmentary sentences which are all that remain of his numerous works supply no warrant. At the same time, Democritus was undoubtedly a man of great knowledge for the age in which he lived, a clear and consistent if not very profound thinker, and endowed with remarkable aptitudes for mathematical and physical investigation. There is, further, no reason to question that the high reputation which he gained for moral worth—for modesty, disinterestedness, integrity, for cheerful wisdom, for love of truth—was well merited. The views of moral life which he inculcated are the very best that one can conceive associated with materialistic and atheistic principles. He held that the sovereign good of man was not to be found in the pleasures of sense, in wealth, in honours, or power—not in external things, nor in what depends on accident or on others—but in tranquillity of mind, in a well-regulated, pure, and peaceful soul. There are true and beautiful thoughts in his fragments on veracity, on courage, on prudence, on justice, on the restraint of passion, the regulation of desire, respect for reason, obedience to law, &c.

Democritus explained the universe by means of space and atoms—the empty and the full. The atoms, infinite in number, moving in infinite space, give rise to infinite worlds. These atoms are eter-

nal, and they are imperishable. There is no real creation and no real destruction ; nothing comes from nothing, and what is ultimate in anything never ceases to be ; what is called creation is merely combination, what is called destruction is merely separation. The quantity of matter in the world, and consequently the quantity of force—for force is merely matter in motion—can neither be increased nor diminished, but must be ever the same. The atoms, he further held, have in themselves no qualitative differences, but merely quantitative ; they differ from one another only in shape, arrangement, and position. All the apparently qualitative differences in objects are due simply to the quantitative differences of the atoms which compose them. Water differs from iron merely because the atoms of the former are smooth and round, and do not fit into but roll over each other; while those of the latter are jagged and uneven and densely packed together. In thus resolving all qualitative differences into quantitative differences, the system of Democritus involved a distinct and marked advance over Chinese and Hindu materialism, or any of the previous Greek philosophies which had attempted to explain the world by physical principles. The soul Democritus regarded as only a body within the body, made of more delicate atoms ; thought as only a more refined and pure sensation ; and

sensations as the impressions produced by images which emanated from external objects.

He could not, of course, overlook the obvious question, Why do the atoms move, and how do they so combine as to give rise to a world at once so orderly and varied? He answered that nothing happened at random, but everything according to law and necessity; that the atoms were infinite in number and endlessly diversified in form; and that in falling through boundless space they dashed against each other, since the larger ones moved more rapidly than the smaller; and that, rebounding and whirling about, they formed aggregates, vortices, worlds, without number. He thus sought to banish from nature every notion of a final cause and supreme ordaining Mind, and to substitute for them a purely mechanical, unconscious, aimless necessity. He referred the popular conceptions of Deity partly to an incapacity to understand fully the phenomena of which we are witnesses, and partly to the impressions occasioned by atmospheric and stellar phenomena. He thus laid the foundation and drew the plan of a system of atheistical materialism which is sometimes presented to us as the most important creation of modern science.

A system like this manifestly contains in itself the germs of its own contradiction and destruction. It tends necessarily to sensationalism and scepti-

cism, and both of these devour, as it were, the mother which begat them. If matter be the sole source and substance of the universe, sensation must be due to the impression of matter on matter, and thought must be but an elaboration of sensation, with no truth or reality in it beyond what it derives from sensation. But in that case what do we know of matter? Nothing at all: we know merely our own sensations of colour, of hearing, of smell, &c., and conjecture, for some mysterious reason or other, that these are the results of material objects acting on a material subject. Democritus saw this,—that there was no heat or cold out of relation to feeling, no bitter or sweet out of relation to the sense of taste, no colour independent of the sense of sight, or sound independent of that of hearing. He granted that all that our senses inform us about things is purely relative to the senses of the individual—is not what things are in themselves, but what they appear to be to the particular person whose senses are affected. He supposed only space and the atoms to be real. But what evidence had he as a materialist and sensationalist for his atoms? None of his senses could apprehend them; and although sense was so little to be trusted, there was nothing on his principles, and can be nothing on materialistic principles, equally to be trusted, or, indeed, to be trusted at all, apart from it. Thus Demo-

critus was virtually affirming that there was all truth in sensation, and that there was no truth in it. No wonder that he said truth lay at the bottom of a well and was hard to find. No wonder that men came after him who said that there was no such thing as truth; that there was nothing for reason save appearance and opinion, and no higher law of life than worldly prudence.[1]

The speculations of Democritus, it cannot be doubted, contributed not a little to the inauguration of the era of the Sophists. The men who are known in history under this designation are now generally admitted to have been until recently represented as even worse than they were. They may certainly be credited with having rendered service to logic, and still more to rhetoric —with having awakened a critical and inquiring spirit—and with having contributed very considerably to the increase of ideas and the spread of intellectual culture. Whatever merits, however, we may thus assign to them, will not warrant us to reverse or do more than unessentially modify the verdict which history so long unhesitatingly pronounced against them. They were not men who sought or found, who believed in or loved truth. Their fundamental principles, so far as they had any, were that sense is the source of all

[1] See Appendix VIII.

thought—that man is the measure of all things —that nothing is by nature true or false, good or bad, but only by convention. It seemed to Socrates and to Plato that these principles were erroneous, and must involve in ruin, reason, virtue, and religion, the individual soul and society ; and they made it their mission in life to refute them, and to prove that directly contrary principles are to be held ;—that thought underlies sense—that the soul is better than the body—that there are for all men who would search for them, a truth and goodness which are not individual and conventional, but universal and eternal—that the search for them is the prime duty of man—and that the finding of them is his distinctive dignity and glory.

The idea which Anaxagoras had introduced into Greek philosophy — the idea, that the order in the universe could only be accounted for by the working of an Eternal Reason — was welcomed by Socrates, and shaped with admirable art into the theistic argument which is most offensive to materialism,—the design argument for the existence of God from the evidences of design in nature, and especially in the animal frame. Plato strove to show that all phenomena presupposed eternal ideas, and that these gradually led up to the Supreme Idea—the highest good—God. Aristotle was scarcely less opposed to materialism than Plato, and in his theory of causes he constructed a

fortress which all the forces of materialism have, down to this day, assailed in vain. Unfortunately, neither Plato nor Aristotle was able to raise himself to the sublime thought which seems to us so simple—the thought of absolute creation, of creation out of nothing by an act of God's omnipotent will. Both granted to matter a certain independence of God; both believed it to be in itself uncreated. Both failed, in consequence, to gain a complete and decisive victory over materialism. Perhaps, also, their philosophies were too large and many-sided to find a lodgment in ordinary minds. Certain it is that they were followed by greatly inferior systems, which, owing in part, perhaps, to their very superficiality and narrowness, acquired no small popularity.

One of these systems was substantially just the philosophy of Democritus revived and developed. Epicurus, its author, was by no means what he boasted himself to be—a "self-taught man," an original thinker—but he had the qualities which enabled him to render his views widely popular. In his lifetime he gathered around him multitudes of friends. His memory was cherished by his followers with extraordinary veneration; in fact, they paid to him the same sort of idolatrous homage which Comte yielded to Madame Clothilde de Vaux, J. S. Mill to his wife, and certain Comtists to their master. Worship is natural to man, and when cut

off from the true object of his worship he will lavish his affections on objects unworthy of them. The philosophy of Epicurus was materialism in the most finished form which it acquired in the ancient world. It had the great good fortune also to find in the Roman poet Lucretius an expositor of marvellous genius — the brightest star by far in the constellation of materialists. The atomic materialism of the present day is still substantially the materialism which Epicurus and Lucretius propounded. It seems necessary, therefore, and may not be without present interest, to consider briefly the principles and pretensions of the materialism maintained by the famous Greek philosopher and the still more famous Roman poet.

It is a theory, I may remark, which originated in a practical motive. Epicurus avowedly did not seek truth for truth's sake. He sought it, and taught others to seek it, only so far as it appeared to be conducive to happiness. Truth, like virtue, was in his eyes, and in the eyes of his followers, to be cultivated merely as a means of avoiding pain and procuring pleasure. The Epicureans sought, therefore, an explanation of the universe which would free men from religious fears, and from religious beliefs so far as these caused fear. Such an explanation they found in the theory of Democritus, and hence they adopted it. The great reason why Lucretius glories in the Epicurean

theory is, that it emancipates the mind from all dread of the Divine anger, and all belief in a future world. Now, it may fairly be doubted, I think, if a system which springs from such a motive can be other than very defective. I grant that there was considerable excuse for the motive in the evils which superstition had caused, and which Lucretius has so powerfully described. In judging either Epicurus or Lucretius, it would be most unjust and uncharitable to forget that the religion with which they were familiar was so fearfully corrupt and degrading as naturally to occasion disbelief in, and aversion to, all religion. But none the less is it true that those whose chief interest in the study of nature is the hope of finding the means of destroying or dispelling religion are almost certain to fall into grave mistakes in their attempts to explain nature. The Epicureans did so. At the same time, the motive, such as it was, induced them to study nature more intensely than they would otherwise have done, or than the rest of their contemporaries did; and physical science profited from this in no small measure. With all its defects the atomic doctrine is the most valuable theory, falling within the sphere of physical science, which modern times have inherited from antiquity. That all physical things at least may be resolved into atomic elements; that these elements can neither be created nor

destroyed, neither increased nor diminished in number, by natural forces; that matter may consequently change endlessly in form and force in direction, but that the quantity of matter and the amount of force in the world are always the same,—are scientific conceptions so grand that the modern world is apt to believe that the ancient world could not have possessed them. There can be no doubt, however, that all these ideas are more than two thousand years old. They lay at the very foundation of the atomic philosophy. All that the most recent science has done in regard to them has been to verify them in particular instances by exact experiments. Modern men of science are apt to imagine that this is really for the first time to have established them. But this is not the case. No general truth can be established by experiment, or be seen by the eye or touched by the hand. It can only be reached by thought, and thought reached all the general truths in question really, although vaguely, very long ago. I cannot admit that there is an essential difference even in method between the ancient and the modern atomists. To say that the former assumed their theory, and unfolded its applications by reasoning down from it, and that the latter reverse the process and reason up to it by induction, is thoroughly inaccurate. The ancients proceeded so far by induction; it is *only so far* that the moderns can proceed by it.

According to the theory we are considering, the ultimate elements of things are body and space—the atom and the void. Space is limitless, immeasurable; the gleaming thunderbolt speeding through it for ever would fail to traverse it, or even in the least to lessen what of it remained. The atoms are numberless, ungenerated, infrangible, unchangeable, indestructible. Their only qualities are form, magnitude, and density; and their variations in these respects account for the diverse qualities in the diverse objects of the universe. This theory ought at once to raise the questions,—What proof is there that these indivisible atoms are really ultimate in any other sense than that they are the primary constituents of body? What evidence is there that they are self-existent? Why should reason stop with them and seek no explanation of them? How is it that they account not only for other things but for themselves? But to these questions we get no rational replies. These are questions which materialism has never dared fairly to confront and grapple with. It has always shown, on the contrary, by its evasion of them, a certain vague and confused consciousness that there is something unsound and insecure at its very basis. Materialism, which is so bold in hypothetical explanations of things, is strangely timid in self-criticism.

Epicurean materialism, like all materialism,

affirms matter to be eternal; but when you seek a reason for the assertion, you can find none save that it is impossible something should come from nothing. That is to say, Epicurean materialism, like all materialism, starts with an illegitimate application of the principle of causality, or of its axiomatic expression,—"Nothing which once was not could ever of itself come into being." By the great body of thoughtful men, both in ancient and modern times, this has been taken to mean merely that nothing can be produced without an adequate cause; that every change demands a full explanation; that every phenomenon must have a sufficient ground. Epicurus, Lucretius, and materialists in general, assume it to mean that, since matter is, matter must always have been; that matter could never have been created; that the world was uncaused. If the assumption be a mere assumption —if no reason be given for this extraordinary interpretation—it is a most inexcusable procedure. Now, vast as the literature of materialism is, you will search it through in vain, from the fragments of Democritus to the last edition of Büchner, for a single reason, a single argument, to justify this manifest begging of the whole question. Instead, you will find only poetical and rhetorical reiterations of the assumption itself, diffuse assertions of the eternity, indestructibility, and self-existence of matter. Materialism thus starts with an irrational

assumption, the true character of which it endeavours to conceal by appealing merely to the imagination.

It was not enough, however, for the purpose which the atomic atheists had in view that they should merely suppose the atoms to be eternal. It was further necessary for them to suppose that the atoms, although without colour or any property perceptible to the senses, had every variety of shape, and the particular sizes, required to enable them to compose the vast variety of things in the universe. If they had all been alike, they could, according to the admission of the atomists themselves, have formed no universe. But, curiously enough, while admitting that they did not see that they were bound to ask and to explain how the atoms came to be unlike; how some of them came to be smooth and round, others to be cubical, others to be hooked and jagged, &c.; and, in a word, how they all came to be just so shaped as to be able collectively to constitute an orderly and magnificent universe. Still more curiously, all materialism down to this day has been afflicted with the same blindness. My belief is, that if it were not thus blind it would die. The light would kill it. It would see that the atoms on which it theorised could not be really ultimate, and implied the power and wisdom of God.

The Epicurean materialists found that, even

when they had imagined their atoms to be eternal, and to be endowed with suitable shapes, their hypothesis would not work. They found that they required to put something more into their atoms before they could get a universe from them. For they had to ask themselves, How do the atoms ever meet and combine? It is obvious that if they all fall in straight lines, and with the same rapidity, they can never meet. Hence Democritus said that the larger ones move faster than the smaller ones, and that this is the cause of their collision and combination. But, objected Aristotle, that cannot be the case in a perfect vacuum where no resistance whatever is offered to the fall of bodies, whether large or small. There all bodies must fall with equal rapidity. The Epicureans admitted that this objection was fatal to the atomic theory as presented by Democritus. Still, as they denied any intelligent First Cause, they had to devise some hypothesis of the contact and aggregation of the atoms. They imagined, accordingly, a small deviation of the atoms from a straight line. But how can this deviation be produced? Not from without the atoms, since nothing but void space is supposed to be without them, and all divine or supernatural interposition is expressly rejected. The Epicureans had therefore no other resource than to hold that the atoms were endowed with a certain spontaneity,

and deviated from the straight line of their own accord ; they ascribed to them a slight measure of freewill. They have often been ridiculed for this, and, it cannot be denied, with justice ; but it is also obvious that there was scarcely any other hypothesis for them to adopt, so long as they adhered to their atheism and materialism.

In even a brief and general estimate of the Epicurean system, this notion, that " when bodies fall sheer down through empty space by their own weights, at quite uncertain times and spots they swerve a little, yet only the least possible, from their course," must have due stress laid on it. For it was no accessory or subordinate feature of the Epicurean theory, but what was most distinctive as well as original in it ; what differentiated it from the allied doctrine of Democritus on the one hand, and from the antagonistic doctrine of the Stoics on the other. It was precisely by means of this conception that Epicurus and Lucretius fancied they escaped the necessity of believing either in the creative and providential action of God, or in the sway of fate,—the two beliefs which seemed to them to be the great enemies of mental peace.

The hypothesis of a slight power of deviation in the atoms was rested on two reasons. In the first place, it was needed to explain the formation of the universe without the intervention of a super-

natural cause. The formation of the universe supposed collision of the atoms. But variety of shape and even difference of weight failed to account for this. If empty space offers no resistance to anything in any direction at any time, all things, whatever their weight, must move through it with equal velocity. If they so move, however, in perfectly parallel lines, they must move, for ever, without clashing against one another, and consequently without producing varied motions and compound bodies. Thus nature never would have formed anything. How, then, could aught have been produced? Only by a certain freedom of action in nature, or by the free action, the intervention, of a Being above nature. But it was a foregone conclusion with Epicurus and Lucretius, just as it is with a host of modern scientific men, that they would not seek for anything above nature—that they would not believe there could be anything beyond matter. They were determined to account for everything entirely by natural principles, by material primordia. Therefore they were compelled to ascribe contingency to nature, spontaneity to matter. At the same time they had a respect for facts, and therefore attributed to nature as little contingency, to matter as little spontaneity, as possible. The atoms must swerve a little, and yet so very little, that neither they nor the bodies composed of them can be

described as moving "slantingly" or "obliquely," since this the reality would refute. The only deviations possible must be imperceptible deviations. It has been said that the Epicureans, by ascribing to atoms the power of deviation, introduced a quite incalculable element into their system. But they had foreseen the objection, and also that they could return to it a twofold answer, —namely, first, that the deviations were imperceptible, leaving all that was perceptible calculable, so that there could be nowhere any miracle or interruption of natural action; and secondly, that although it could not be determined when and where an atom would act in the way of deviation, once it had so acted all the results could be determined—or, in other words, that spontaneity and law, contingency and calculation, were not incompatible. Much might, perhaps, be said in defence of these answers. The weakness of the hypothesis lay less at this point than in ignoring the consideration that if the atoms possessed the power of deviation that was itself a fact to be accounted for. Whence came the countless hosts of atoms to be all provided with so remarkable a characteristic? Some one ground or cause was demanded for their all agreeing in this curious and useful peculiarity. Such single ground or cause could only be a something above and beyond themselves. The feeble wills with which the

atoms were supposed to be endowed implied a mighty supernatural will as their source. For not recognising this single ultimate will Epicurus and Lucretius had no relevant reason. They stopped short at the atoms in sheer wilfulness; they saw nothing beyond them because they had beforehand determined on no account to look beyond them.

In the second place, the hypothesis of a certain degree of spontaneity in the atoms recommended itself to the Epicureans as a warrant for rejecting fatalism, and as an explanation of free will in living things. Epicurus pronounced the fatalism of the physicists and philosophers even more disquieting and discouraging than superstition; the goodwill of the gods might be gained by honouring them, but there are no means by which fate can be controlled. He and his followers accepted free-will in man as a fact fully guaranteed to them by consciousness and observation. But if there be freewill in man there must be freewill elsewhere to account for it; only nothing can come from nothing; only necessity from necessity. If, then, there be no Being above nature, and all must be explained from nature, freewill must have its cause in nature, and nature cannot be wholly subject to necessity. "If all motion is ever linked together, and a new motion ever springs from another in a fixed order, and first beginnings do

not by swerving make some commencement of motion to break through the decrees of fate, that cause follow not cause from everlasting, whence have all living creatures here on earth, whence, I ask, has been wrested from the fates the power by which we go forward whither the will leads each, by which likewise we change the direction of our motions neither at a fixed time nor fixed place, but when and where the mind itself has prompted?" The Roman poet could give to this question of his own no more rational answer on materialistic principles than the one which has been mentioned. If the materialist maintain that there is nothing but necessity in nature, he must maintain also that there is nothing but necessity in man. If he admit that there is spontaneity or freedom in man, he must admit that it is inherent likewise in nature. Necessity in both nature and man, or freedom in both, is the only reasonable alternative. The effort to deduce truly voluntary movements from purely mechanical causes is nonsensical. But when Epicurus and Lucretius followed reason so far, why did they not follow it farther, and pack reason as well as will into their atoms, and emotion and conscience too, and so endow each atom with a complete mind? They might at least have anticipated Professor Clifford, and told us that "a moving molecule of inorganic matter possesses a small piece of mind-stuff."

Having conformed their atoms to the needs of their system, the Epicureans proceeded to explain how the universe was formed; how from the boundless mass of matter, heaven, and earth, and ocean, sun and moon, rose in nice order. The atoms, so we are told, "jostling about of their own accord, in infinite modes, were often brought together confusedly, irregularly, and to no purpose, but at length they successfully coalesced; at least, such of them as were thrown together suddenly became, in succession, the beginnings of great things—as earth, and air, and sea, and heaven." With magnificent breadth of conception, and often with genuine scientific insight, Lucretius, following the guidance of Epicurus, has described how, in obedience to mechanical laws, from atoms of "solid singleness," inorganic matter assumed its various forms and organic nature passed through its manifold stages; what living creatures issued from the earth; how speech was invented; how society originated and governments were instituted; how civilisation commenced; and in what ways religion gained an entry into men's hearts. He thoroughly appreciated the significance of the doctrine of evolution in the system of materialism. The development theory has been ingeniously improved at many particular points in recent times, but it has not been widened in range. It was just as comprehensive in the hands of Lucre-

tius as it is in those of Herbert Spencer. Its aim and method are still the same; its problems are the same; its principles of solution are the same; the solutions themselves are often the same. I state this as a fact, not as a reproach; for I do not object to the development theory in itself, but only to it in association with atheism. Atheism has done much to discredit it; it has contributed nothing to the proof of atheism.

The Epicurean materialists refused to recognise anywhere the traces of a creative or governing Intelligence. The mechanical explanation which they gave of the formation of things seemed to them to preclude the view that aught was effected by Divine power or wisdom. Like their successors in modern times, they regarded efficient causes as incompatible with final causes; and, like them also, they dwelt in confirmation of their opinion on the alleged defects of nature, blaming the arrangements of the heavens and the earth with the same vehemence and narrowness which have become so familiar to us of late. And yet they were not unwilling to admit the existence of the gods worshipped by the people, if conceived of as only a sort of etherealised men, utterly unconnected with the world and its affairs. "Beware," says Epicurus, "of attributing the revolutions of the heaven, and eclipses, and the rising and setting of stars, either to the original contrivance or con-

tinued regulation of a Divine Being. For business, and cares, and anger, and benevolence, are not accordant with happiness, but arise from weakness, and fear, and dependence on others." The Epicureans, in fact, conceived of the gods as ideal Epicureans—as beings serenely happy, without care, occupation, or sorrow.

To belief in the immortality of the soul they offered strenuous opposition. It was one of the prime recommendations of materialism in their eyes, that it supplied them with arms to combat this belief. They laboured to prove the soul material in order that they might infer it to be mortal, and with such diligence that scarcely a plausible argument seems to have escaped them. They could not, they felt, emancipate men from fear of future retribution otherwise than by persuading them that there was no future to fear—that death was an eternal sleep. Therefore they taught that "the nature of the mind cannot come into being alone without the body, nor exist far away from sinews and blood;" that "death concerns us not a jot, since the nature of the mind is proved to be mortal;" that "death is nothing to us, for that which is dissolved is devoid of sensation, and that which is devoid of sensation is nothing to us." All the consolation which Lucretius can offer to the heart shrinking at the prospect of death, is the reflection that it will escape the ills of life.

"But thy dear home shall never greet thee more!
No more the best of wives! thy babes beloved,
Whose haste half met thee, emulous to snatch
The dulcet kiss that roused thy secret soul,
Again shall never hasten! nor thine arm,
With deeds heroic, guard thy country's weal!
'O mournful, mournful fate!' thy friends exclaim;
'One envious hour of these invalued joys
Robs thee for ever!' But they add not here,
'It robs thee, too, of all desire of joy'—
A truth once uttered, that the mind would free
From every dread and trouble. 'Thou art safe!
The sleep of death protects thee, and secures
From all the outnumbered woes of mortal life.'"

It is strange that a thoughtful mind—that a susceptible heart—that a man of poetic genius—could for a moment have deluded himself with the fancy that humanity was to be comforted in its sorrows, or strengthened for its duties, by a notion like this. No human being can be profited by being told that he will die as the brute dieth; that death will free him from pain and fear only by robbing him of all joy and love. But such is the only gospel which materialism has to offer. The system of which the first word is, In the beginning there was nothing except space and atoms, has for its last word, Eternal Death; as the system of which the first word is, In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, has for its last word, Eternal Life. What man who has a mind to think can hesitate to choose between Eternal Reason and Eternal Unreason? What man whc

has a heart to feel can hesitate to choose between Eternal Life and Eternal Death?[1]

Yet there are those who hesitate to choose; and there are those who choose wrongly. Much may be said in excuse of those who thus doubted and erred in pagan Greece and Rome. The only religions with which they were acquainted gave the most inconsistent and perverted views, both of Deity and of the world to come. If men in their abhorrence of these religions unhappily rejected all religion, we must pity them even more than we condemn them. But we live in a later and more favoured age, when God has been clearly revealed in the beauty of holiness and love, and when life and immortality have been brought to light. A higher good than the greatest of Greek or Roman sages ever longed for has been placed within the reach of the humblest, the poorest, the least instructed. The way has been made plain by which we may be freed from fear of death, and from fear of all that lies beyond death. *We* can have no excuse for preferring death to life. Eternal death ought to be no bribe to *us*. Light has come into the world. Let us not be among those who choose darkness rather than light.

[1] See Appendix IX.

LECTURE III.

MODERN MATERIALISM.

In the middle ages there was little physical science and almost no materialism. This was not because there were few great minds or little mental activity in those ages, but because the human intellect was then almost exclusively occupied with religion and theology. Christianity rested on the belief that there was a God, the Creator of the universe and the Father of spirits, who had in the fulness of time made a special and perfect revelation of His character and will in Jesus Christ. Before the light and power of this belief, ancient materialism, like ancient polytheism, faded and withered away. The Christian Church in its earliest days had to battle with heathenism and Judaism, open and avowed, or with suppressed tendencies towards both, expressing themselves in the form of heresy. It had neither the time nor the inclination to busy itself directly with theories

which it felt confident of being able to destroy by simply propagating itself. The Christian Fathers, down to the fall of the Roman empire, had their energies fully occupied in the defence of fundamental truths of religion, and especially of those involved in the great doctrine of the Trinity. The schoolmen sought to elaborate the faith which they had inherited into a comprehensive philosophy. Scholasticism was essentially the union, or, perhaps, rather the fusion of theology and philosophy. It proceeded on the assumption that there are not two studies, one of philosophy and the other of religion, but that true philosophy is true religion, and true religion is true philosophy. A theological philosophy was alone possible in the middle ages, and the widespread and intense interest felt in it shows how well adapted it was to meet the desires of men in those times. Medieval speculation was, as a whole, theistic and Christian; it was, as a whole, an effort to comprehend as well as to apprehend Christian truth. Even when not so it might be pantheistic, but it was not materialistic. Mohammedanism, although it was not found to be incompatible with the culture of physical science, was no less hostile to materialism than Christianity. Thus for centuries materialism had almost no existence, almost no history.[1]

[1] See Appendix X.

With the downfall of scholasticism and the emancipation of the mind from ecclesiastical authority, materialistic tendencies began to manifest themselves; but it is late even in modern times before we reach a completely materialistic system. Lord Bacon ranked Democritus higher than Aristotle, but he was no materialist; he simply regarded the atomic hypothesis as luminous and fruitful.

"I had rather," he wrote, "believe all the fables in the legend, and the Talmud, and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without Mind; and therefore, God never wrought miracles to convince atheism, because His ordinary works convince it. It is true, a little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism, but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion; for while the mind of man looketh upon the second causes scattered, it may sometimes rest in them, and go no farther; but when it beholdeth the chain of them confederate and linked together, it must needs fly to Providence and Deity. Nay, even that school which is most accused of atheism doth most demonstrate religion—that is the school of Leucippus, and Democritus, and Epicurus; for it is a thousand times more credible, that four mutable elements and one immutable fifth essence, duly and eternally placed, need no God, than that an army of infinite small portions, or seeds unplaced,

should have produced this order and beauty without a Divine Marshal."

Gassendi, a dignitary of the Roman Catholic Church, a contemporary and friend yet opponent of Descartes, laboured to present the life and the doctrines of Epicurus in the most favourable light. He endeavoured to prove that all physical phenomena might be accounted for by the vacuum and atoms, and referred to mathematical and mechanical laws. He rejected, however, all Epicurean tenets which seemed to him inconsistent with Christian truth. He maintained God to be the Creator of the atoms, the first cause and ultimate explanation of all things. Some of his contemporaries insinuated doubts as to the sincerity of his religious professions, and some of the historians of philosophy have repeated them, but they are wholly unsupported by evidence, and quite inconsistent with our general knowledge of the high personal character of the man.

Among his friends was the famous Thomas Hobbes. He was, perhaps, more of a materialist not only than any man of his generation, but than any writer to be met with in literature until we come down to the middle of the eighteenth century. He held that we can only reason where we can add and subtract, combine and divide. But where is that? Only where there is what will compound and divide, only where there are

bodies and bodily properties, since there is no place for composition or division, no capacity of more or less, in spirit. The consequence is plain, —there can be no science, no philosophy of spirit. Spirit even as finite is beyond comprehension, beyond the range of experiment and sense, and therefore beyond reasoning and beyond science; and still more is it so with Spirit as infinite, eternal, ingenerable, incomprehensible, that is with the doctrine of God or Theology. We have here a narrow notion of the nature of reasoning, and then a notion of its object made equally narrow to suit it. The reduction of reasoning to the processes of addition and subtraction, and the denial that philosophy can be conversant about anything but body and bodily properties, depend on each other, but are both errors. Philosophy as universal science has a right to extend wherever truth is attainable by reason. Is spiritual truth attainable through reason? Hobbes answered that it was not— that only truth about bodies was attainable. This, however, he forgot to prove. In consequence of assuming it, he represented man as capable of religion only through inspiration, tradition, authority, apart from and independent of reason, which knows not and cannot know God truly. Religion is thus a thing which cannot be proved true; which must be accepted on some other ground than that of truth.

Philosophy, then, according to Hobbes, is con-

versant only with bodies and their properties. It is the sum of human knowledge so far as reasoned about bodies. He refers all thought to sensation, and all sensation to matter and motion, sense being simply motion in the organs and interior parts of man's body, caused by external objects pressing either immediately or mediately the organ proper to each sense. The pressure, he holds, when continued by the mediation of the nerves, and other strings and membranes of the body to the brain, causes there a resistance or counter-pressure which, because *outward*, seems to be some matter without, and consists as to the eye in a light or colour, to the ear in a sound, to the nostril in an odour, to the tongue and palate in a savour, and to the rest of the body in heat, cold, hardness, softness, and such other qualities as we discern by feeling; and when the action of an object is continued from the eyes, ears, and other organs to the heart, the real effect there is nothing but motion or endeavour, and the appearance or sense of that motion is delight or trouble of mind, pleasure or pain. He thus resolves mind into matter, thought and feeling into mechanical action.

And yet Hobbes was not the sort of man to make a mere materialist. The materialist must not think. If he think he will ask himself what matter is, and that is enough to break the sway of matter. Now Hobbes was a thinker. He

accordingly put to himself the question, What is matter? The result was, that he found matter in the materialist sense virtually to vanish. He found that we know nothing of matter in itself; that what we know is what he calls "the seeming," "the apparition," "the phenomenon;" that colour is just what is seen, sound just what is heard, but not inherent qualities of objects independent of seeing and hearing; that the matter which he supposed to cause by its motions in our senses these and other perceptions of the material world we cannot see, hear, or apprehend by any sense. No human sense has ever laid hold of it, or can describe a single quality it possesses. It is something utterly mysterious and unknown. Hobbes confessed all this. What right, then, had he to say that this mysterious matter was the substance and explanation of the world? None at all. Nay, had he been consistent he would have refused wholly to admit its existence. He would have said it was useless and unprovable. He would have been an idealist.

Besides, while Hobbes excluded religion from the sphere of what can be proved, he accepted it as matter of faith. He severed it from reason to rest it on authority. And in thus denying theology to be rational knowledge he did no more than Descartes and little more than Bacon, whose principles did not so logically lead to this issue as

his. These three thinkers all referred theology and philosophy to entirely distinct sources. They represented the one as having nothing to do with the other; as having each an authority of its own; as having each a province in which for the other to enter is an act of usurpation. They drew the sharpest separation between reason and faith, philosophy and religion. They sought to save the one from the possibility of antagonism with the other, by describing them as quite unconnected in their principles, processes, and character. This was a reaction from the scholastic dogmatism which had ignored their real distinctions and endeavoured to make all science theological and all theology strict science. Hobbes professed himself to be an orthodox English Churchman. We have certainly no warrant to charge him with atheism.

The materialism even of Hobbes was thus incomplete. But no system of materialism more complete than his appeared in Great Britian until very recent times. When we remember the moral condition of the nation from the restoration of the Stuart dynasty in 1660 to the close of the eighteenth century, how low the general tone of spiritual life was throughout the whole period, how corrupt and profligate at certain dates, we can feel no surprise that numerous works were published in advocacy of materialistic tenets. The remarkable fact is one which our historians of

literature and philosophy have not attempted to explain—namely, that the authors of none of these works should have been thorough materialists. He is, of course, a very incomplete materialist who admits the necessity of a God to account for matter. But English materialism throughout the whole period specified was of this timid character. The materialism of Coward and of Dodwell, of Hartley and of Priestley, was limited to denial of the spirituality of the soul. What materialism there was in England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it must be added, was triumphantly answered. The refutations of materialism were not only far more numerous than the defences of it, but also, as a rule, much abler. Cudworth and More, Newton and Boyle, Clarke and Sherlock and Butler, headed a host of eminent men who took the field on the right side, and drove the materialists from every position which they ventured to take up. The history of materialism in England is the reverse of brilliant.

It was only when transplanted from England to France, in the generation before the Revolution, that materialism grew up to maturity. A variety of causes which have been often traced, and which it is unnecessary in this rapid survey to specify, had there prepared a soil suitable for its reception. And yet comparatively few of the philosophers popular in that sceptical and corrupt age

had the hardihood to advocate it in its atheistical form. Voltaire despised it as sheer stupidity. Rousseau hated it with all his heart. Condillac argued against it with conviction and ability. It was only after he had drifted through various stages of deism and pantheism that Diderot settled in materialistic atheism. The adherents of this system did not become numerous until close on the eve of the Revolution. The men of this second generation who devoted themselves to its advocacy were fanatically zealous in its behalf; but they were also wholly destitute of originality, or even ingenuity, and without literary talent of any kind. Perhaps the best representatives of French materialism in the eighteenth century were La Mettrie and Von Holbach.[1]

The physician La Mettrie, in his 'Natural History of the Soul' (1745), his 'Man Machine' (1748), and other works, was the first frankly to declare himself a materialist. He was little thought of in his own day as a man, a physician, or a philosopher. It is characteristic of ours, however, that within the last few years several authors —Assézat and Quépat in France, Lange and Du Bois-Reymond in Germany—should have tried to rehabilitate him, as it is called,—to prove that he was a most excellent person, better skilled in medicine than the rest of his profession, and an

[1] See Appendix XI.

original philosophical genius. I confess, I think, they could not have been less profitably occupied. To represent La Mettrie as either a man of much moral worth or of much talent is to falsify history.

He does not absolutely deny that there is a God. It shows the mental calibre of the man that he should, in one sentence, say that it is very probable there may be a God, and then, in those which immediately follow, that there are no grounds for believing in the existence of God—that even if there be a God, there is no need for us to have any religion—and that it is foolish to trouble ourselves as to whether there is a God or not. In one page he affirms that it is perfectly indifferent to our happiness whether God does or does not exist, and a few pages further on he is pleased to inform us that the world will never be happy till atheism is universal. It did not occur to him that although both of these assertions might very well be false, they certainly could not both be true. The reason which he gave for the opinion that the world could not be happy until atheism was universal was, that only then would religious wars and strifes cease. Well, of course, if there were no religion people could not fight about it. But, obviously, they might still fight about other things, and even fight about them more frequently and ignobly than they do at present, just because of

the absence of religion. Dogs have no religion, but they quarrel over a bone. Take away from man all interests and motives higher than those of a beast, and you do not thereby secure that he will be peaceable; on the contrary, you insure that he will quarrel as a beast and not as a man.

La Mettrie denies that there is much difference between man and beast. He thought the higher apes more closely related to human beings than most Darwinians even would admit them to be. He was anxious that they should be learned the use of language by Amman's method of instructing the deaf and dumb, and hoped that mankind would thus receive a numerous and valuable addition to their ranks. Any superiority which he admitted man to have over them — it was very little—he attributed wholly to the better organisation of his brain and to the education which he received. The brain, he held, was the soul—the part of the body which thinks—a part endowed with fibres of thinking, just as the legs have muscles of motion. Of course, death, which destroys the rest of the body, destroys the brain— the so-called soul. When death comes the farce of human life is played out. In consistency with these views he represented pleasure — sensuous pleasure—as the chief end of life. He excused vices on the ground that they are organic diseases, and that man cannot control himself. He jeers

at modesty and chastity, at love and friendship. He is often coarse and cynical. This is the man who, the recent writers I have mentioned complain, has hitherto not had justice done to him. It would have been a wiser and truer charity in them if they had left his memory in the obscurity which befits it.[1]

Von Holbach was a German baron settled in Paris—rich, kind-hearted, and generous; well read, especially in physical science; with considerable intellect of a heavy kind;—the very centre, however, of the infidelity collected in the French capital, as he kept open house, and gave the philosophers excellent entertainment, with perfect freedom to ventilate at his table the wildest and profanest of their theories. He was undoubtedly the chief author of that notorious work which has been called the Bible of atheistical materialism—the 'System of Nature.' It appeared in 1770, and bore two falsehoods on its title-page: it professed to be written by a M. de Mirabaud, a deceased secretary of the Academy, who had had nothing to do with its composition; and it professed to be published at London, whereas it was really published at Amsterdam. Its style is at once declamatory and dreary; but it has qualities which render it a favourite instrument of atheistical propagandism. It is inspired by an honest fan-

[1] See Appendix XII.

aticism. Its author is always terribly in earnest —sometimes, it must be confessed, ludicrously so. He never betrays any signs of want of confidence in his own conclusions. His generalisations are frequently imposing. His argumentation is often not wanting in acuteness, subtilty, or plausibility. The book which perplexed for a time the mind of Chalmers, has, doubtless, fatally perverted the judgment of many an average intellect.

A distinctive feature of the work is the explicitness with which the idea of God is assailed—with which His existence is denied. Epicurus and Lucretius, even, in spite of their anxiety to throw off the yoke of religion, did not refuse to believe that there were gods, but only that they acted on the world or were interested in human affairs. All the materialists of England stopped short of a denial of the Divine Existence. La Mettrie himself affirmed the probability of the Divine Existence, although he proceeded forthwith to show its non-probability. In the 'System of Nature' there is no compromise or indecision on this point. The denial of the Divine Existence is open and absolute. The belief in His existence is directly, vehemently, elaborately attacked. The origin of religion is traced to fear, ignorance, and the experience of misery, and described as irrational and mischievous in all its forms. The only notion of God which is not absurd is held

to be that which identifies Him with the moving power in nature. Deism is rejected as untenable in itself, and as leading to superstition. Atheism is maintained to be the truth, the true system, the true philosophy, which must be accepted wherever nature is rightly understood.

This truth, Von Holbach seriously assures us, is not calculated for the vulgar, not suitable to the great mass of mankind. "Atheism," he writes, "supposes reflection; requires intense study; demands extensive knowledge; exacts a long series of experiences; includes the habit of contemplating nature; the faculty of observing her laws, which, in short, embraces the comprehensive study of the causes producing her various phenomena —her multiplied combinations, together with the diversified actions of the beings she contains, as well as their numerous properties. In order to be an atheist, or to be assured of the capabilities of nature, it is imperative to have meditated on her profoundly: a superficial glance of the eye will not bring man acquainted with her resources; optics but little practised on her powers will be unceasingly deceived; the ignorance of actual causes will always induce the supposition of those which are imaginary; credulity will thus reconduct the natural philosopher himself to the feet of superstitious phantoms, in which either his limited vision or his habitual sloth will make him believe he shall find

the solution of every difficulty." While Holbach was writing these words history was falsifying them by showing that atheism was a creed which the vulgarest of the vulgar could easily learn. The masses whom the philosophers despised were overhearing them, and finding no difficulty in understanding the propositions, There is no God, There is no soul, There is nothing in the universe which may not be resolved into matter and motion. These propositions have never been proved by any one; but the stupidest of men may understand them without difficulty, and believe them and act on them to his own ruin and his neighbours' injury. Our atheistical men of science need not suppose that atheistical materialism is a kind of wisdom which they can keep to themselves, so that it will not get into the possession of the dangerous classes, who may make a frightful use of it. The dangerous classes, explain it how you may, are just those who have always shown a special aptitude for believing it. Holbach, to do him justice, although he thought the masses unqualified to understand and appreciate atheism, did not wish or endeavour to conceal it from them; on the contrary, he wished and zealously strove to propagate it among them. The result amply proved that the task was not a difficult one.

What Holbach substitutes for God is matter

and motion. These two, he holds, are inseparable. Matter is not dead but essentially active. Observation and reflection, he says, ought to convince us that everything in nature is in continual motion; that there is not one of its parts, however minute, that enjoys true repose; that nature acts in all; that she would cease to be nature if she did not act. To the obvious question, Whence did nature receive her motion? he answers, "We do not know, neither do you; we never shall, you never will." It is a most unreasonable answer to a most reasonable question. Those who put the question are men who offer reasons for believing that the materials and the motions of the universe are so fashioned, combined, and arranged as to point back to a true and intelligent cause; and no one can have a right to set aside their reasons by merely asserting that it can never be known whence motion comes. The contention of the theist is, that it may be perfectly well known that both matter and motion come from a Supreme and Intelligent Will. Further, to affirm that matter moves of its own peculiar energies—that it is essentially active and alive—is contrary to a truth which all experience confirms, and on which all physical and mechanical calculations are based, —namely, that matter moves only as it is moved —that if not acted on it will never move—and that if once set in motion it will only cease mov-

ing through being resisted. He who believes in the activity of matter must abandon belief in its inertia. Like all materialists, Holbach had to ascribe to matter more than he had right to do, in order to be able to deduce the more from it.

This is also to be observed, that Holbach's heart had at least as much to do as his head with ascribing activity and life to nature. It craved for more than a merely material universe. It had affections and aspirations which could only have been satisfied by a very different answer to the problem of existence than that which materialism had to offer, and although they never were satisfied they exerted some influence. Speculative atheist although he was, Holbach unconsciously felt the need of having a being to worship. He denied nature's God, but the soul within him worked through his imagination, and transformed nature until he could adore *it* as his god. All through his book he is ever and again vindicating, glorifying, and invoking nature as a kind of deity. What is this, for example, but prayer to nature as to a god, but worship of an unenlightened and inconsistent kind? "O nature, sovereign of all beings! and ye, her adorable daughters, virtue, reason, and truth! remain for ever our revered protectors: it is to you that belong the praises of the human race; to you appertains the homage of the earth. Show us then, O nature, that which man ought

to do in order to obtain the happiness which thou makest him desire. Banish error from our mind, wickedness from our hearts, confusion from our footsteps; cause knowledge to extend its benignant reign, goodness to occupy our souls, serenity to dwell in our bosoms."

There are numerous passages of this character in the 'System of Nature.' Sometimes even a better genius than his own familiar spirit takes possession of its author, and causes him utterly to forget that he is the avowed enemy of theism, and a believer only in matter and motion. Witness a passage like the following, which is in direct contradiction to the atheism he usually and explicitly inculcates: "The great Cause of causes must have produced everything; but is it not lessening the true dignity of the Divinity to introduce Him as interfering in every operation of nature—nay, in every action of so insignificant a creature as man,—as a mere agent, executing His own eternal, immutable laws; when experience, when reflection, when the evidence of all we contemplate, warrants the idea that this ineffable Being has rendered nature competent to every effect, by giving her those irrevocable laws, that eternal, unchangeable system, according to which all the beings she sustains must eternally act? Is it not more worthy of the exalted mind of the Great Parent of parents, *ens entium*, more consistent with truth,

to suppose that His wisdom, in giving these immutable, these eternal laws to the macrocosm, foresaw everything that could possibly be requisite for the happiness of the beings contained in it; that, therefore, He left it to the invariable operation of a system, which never can produce any effect that is not the best possible that circumstances, however viewed, will admit?"

In the work under consideration, order and confusion are maintained to have no existence in nature itself. All is necessarily in order, we are told, since everything acts and moves according to constant and invariable laws; confusion is consequently impossible. But as it is at the same time admitted that a series of motions or actions, although necessitated, may or may not conspire to one common end, and as coexistent individuals of any kind may either promote or oppose the development of one another, the reality both of order and confusion is actually granted while professedly denied. That a child should be born without eyes or legs is as much an effect of natural causes as that it should be born with them; but seeing that eyes and legs are really useful to human beings, and not merely supposed by them to be useful, the possession or want of eyes and legs may be characterised with the strictest propriety as an example of order or confusion. In like manner, theft and

murder, whatever their motives or the character of their causation, are instances of real disorder in the moral world, because violations of a law which is not created by any thoughts or imaginations of ours. There is a plain distinction between causation and fitness, and the latter is as really in nature as the former.

Man, according to Holbach, is entirely material. Immateriality and spirituality he pronounces to be meaningless words. The mental faculties he represents as only determinate manners of acting which result from the peculiar organisation of the body; feeling, thought, and will, as only modifications of the nerves and brain. He reiterates and amplifies these assertions, but he does not prove them; and, indeed, they are obviously not only erroneous but nonsensical. The brain is a thing which can be examined by sight and other senses; its minutest changes might be traced by an eye of sufficient strength, or by an ordinary eye assisted by a sufficiently powerful microscope; but a thought, a feeling, a volition cannot even be conceived as perceived by the sight or any sense. When a man describes any state of consciousness as a modification of the brain, or of any part of the body, he uses language to which no meaning can be attached.

Holbach, believing that there is no God, and that all that is called spirit in man is merely a

modification of the body, naturally denies both immortality and freewill. The belief in a future life is represented as a dream, a delusion. The grave is supposed to receive into it the whole man. Free agency is regarded as a mere fiction. "Man's life," we are told, "is a line drawn by nature from which he cannot swerve even for an instant. He is born without his own consent; his organisation in no wise depends upon himself; his ideas come to him involuntarily; his habits are in the power of those who cause him to contract them; he is unceasingly modified by causes, whether visible or concealed, over which he has no control, and which necessarily determine his way of thinking and manner of acting. He is good or bad, happy or miserable, wise or foolish, rational or irrational, without his will going for anything in these various states."

There is thus, according to Holbach, no God, no soul, no future life, no freewill. Many will think that from these premises he should have drawn the conclusion, there is no morality. He did not quite do that, for the man was greatly better than his system; but, of course, he could not inculcate a pure or high morality. He could only rest duty on self-interest. He could only recommend virtue as a means to each man's happiness. "Disinterested," he tells us, "is a term only applied to those of whose motives

we are ignorant, or whose interest we approve," and "virtue is only the art of rendering one's self happy by the felicity of others." It would be unjust and ungenerous to deny that he recommended the various personal and social virtues with warmth, and in the accents of sincerity; but it was on grounds which can be naturally and readily employed to excuse vice.[1]

The moral principles advocated by La Mettrie and Holbach were not peculiar to them. Helvetius, Saint Lambert, Morelly, and a host of other writers, likewise inculcated a more or less refined selfishness, as the sole sure basis both of ethical theory and ethical life. They could not consistently do anything else. Materialism and sensationalism can provide no other basis for morality than self-love. But on such a basis morality can never either rise high or stand firm. The nation whose life rests on so crumbling a corner-stone is on the eve of a catastrophe. This was exemplified in the case of France. It would be incorrect, I believe, to say that the sceptics and atheists of that country caused, with their false and pernicious principles, either the Revolution or the horrors which accompanied it. The corrupt and disorganised state of society at that time contributed to form scepticism and atheism not less than scepticism and atheism

[1] See Appendix XIII.

contributed to deteriorate society. There was action and reaction. The atheism of the epoch was as much the effect as the cause of its corruption. It was, certainly, not wholly either the effect or the cause, but was partly both. Further, the enormous and bewildering mass of events and declarations called the French Revolution need not be pronounced either wholly or mainly evil, nor need the sceptical philosophers be denied to have been largely instrumental in diffusing salutary truths as well as pernicious errors. We may give all due justice to the Revolution and its authors and yet hold that its worst features were the natural expressions of the materialistic and atheistic views and the selfish and sensuous principles prevalent in the generation which accomplished it, and in the generation which preceded it. When God was decreed a non-entity and death an eternal sleep, when divine worship was abolished and marriage superseded, the rights of property disregarded, and life lavishly and wantonly sacrificed, the atheistical materialism of La Mettrie and Von Holbach was seen bearing its appropriate poisonous fruit. If you convince men that in nature and destiny they are not essentially different from the beasts that perish, it may well be feared that they will live and act as beasts, casting off, as far as they can, all the restraints imposed by human and divine institutions, all

the bonds of the family, the Church, and the State.

While materialism contributed in a considerable measure to bring about the Revolution, the Revolution did little to diffuse materialism and much to discredit it. A reaction set in. A vast intellectual and moral change, the causes of which have not yet, perhaps, been adequately traced, came over the European mind. Religion, poetry, literature, science, philosophy, were all permeated and quickened by a new and deeper spirit. The consequence was that materialism lost its hold on men's minds and sank into general contempt. The generation that admired Goethe and Schiller, Wordsworth and Coleridge, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Cousin, Hamilton, could only wonder that a theory so poor and shallow as materialism had ever exerted a wide and powerful influence. It seemed as if its day were past; as if it could never return, except, perhaps, in some very subtle and refined form.

But it is not to be hoped that materialism will ever quite be got rid of, so long as the constitution of the human mind and the character of human society remain substantially what they are. Physical nature and its laws explain much, and so long as the human mind is prone to exaggeration, and education is imperfect and one-sided, and society is more under the influence of the seen than the

unseen, of the temporal than the eternal, it may be anticipated that many will fancy that matter and motion explain everything—and this fancy is the essence of materialism. Thus materialism is a danger to which individuals and societies will always be more or less exposed. The present generation, however, and especially the generation which is growing up, will obviously be very specially exposed to it; as much so, perhaps, as any generation in the history of the world. Within the last thirty years the great wave of spiritualistic or idealistic thought, which has borne to us on its bosom most of what is of chief value in the nineteenth century, has been receding and decreasing; and another, which is in the main driven by materialistic forces, has been gradually rising behind it, vast and threatening. It is but its crests that we at present see; it is but a certain vague shaking produced by it that we at present feel; but we shall probably soon enough fail not both to see and feel it fully and distinctly. Materialism has gained to itself a lamentably large proportion of the chiefs of contemporary science, and it finds in them advocates as outspoken and enthusiastic as were Lucretius and Holbach. Multitudes are disposed to listen and believe with an uninquiring and irrational faith. Materialism—atheistical materialism—may at no distant date, unless earnestly and wisely opposed, be strong enough to

undertake to alter all our institutions, and to abolish those which it dislikes.

How is it that materialism has reappeared in such force? The following considerations may yield a partial answer. In the first place, the materialism of the eighteenth century has actually descended to, or been inherited by, the present generation. Although for a considerable time materialism was feeble and unpopular, it was never wholly without defenders. The continuity of its history was at no point completely broken. In England, for example, three generations of Darwins have entertained materialistic convictions. Works like Thomas Hope's 'Essay on the Origin and Progress of Man,' and the anonymous 'Vestiges of Creation,' connect the 'Zoonomia' of Erasmus Darwin with the 'Origin of Species' of Charles Darwin. The principles of sensationalism found not a few zealous defenders when the antagonistic doctrine was at the height of its success, and sensationalism is intimately related to materialism. About 1840 atheism began to be openly avowed to a considerable extent among the working classes, and what has since been called secularism made its appearance. Secularism involves materialism. In 1851 Mr Henry G. Atkinson and Miss Harriet Martineau published their 'Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development,' advocating without reservation or

restraint a crude materialism and utter atheism. They taught that "philosophy finds no God in nature, nor sees the want of any;" that "fitness in nature is no evidence of design;" that "all causes are material causes influenced by surrounding circumstances;" that "mind is the manifestation or expression of the brain in action;" that "instinct, passion, thought, are effects of organised substances;" that "only ignorance conceives the will to be free;" that "there is no more sin in a crooked disposition than in a crooked stick in the water, or in a hump-back or a squint;" and that "we ought to be content that in death the lease of personality shall pass away, and that we shall be as we were before we were—in a sleep for evermore." It was no wonder that England was shocked to be asked in the middle of the nineteenth century to receive this old and sad story as good news of great joy. But in the years which have since elapsed a host of compositions have appeared avowing quite as nakedly disbelief in God, spirit-freedom, responsibility, and belief only in the properties and products of matter.[1]

Materialism was still more influential in France than in England throughout the first half of the present century. What little philosophy there was under the revolutionary governments and the Empire proceeded mainly on sensationalistic

[1] See Appendix XIV.

or materialistic principles. Cabanis, De Tracy, Volney, Garat, Broussais, Azais, adhered essentially to the popular philosophical creed of the eighteenth century. Other systems of thought in process of time appeared and gained a temporary supremacy. The theocratic and eclectic theories, in particular, had for a season the most brilliant success, and both were hostile to materialism in all its forms. Alongside of them, however, arose and spread the socialistic doctrines and schools, which all favoured more or less both theoretical and ethical materialism. The rehabilitation of the flesh—the subordination of everything in man to his stomach and senses—was the common aim of the socialistic schemes for the improvement of humanity. Even when the existence of God was not denied, as in the system of Fourier, duty was dethroned and sensuous desire raised into the vacant throne. The condemnation of socialism is that it has shown itself blind to spiritual and open-eyed to material interests. M. Emile de Girardin expressed clearly and pointedly, not merely his own faith, but that of the vast majority of his socialistic countrymen, when he laid down as established truths—

"That God has no existence; or that if He exists, it is impossible for man to demonstrate the fact.
That the world exists of itself, and of itself solely.
That man has no original sin to ransom.

That he bears about him memory and reason, as flame bears with it heat and light.
That he lives again in the flesh only in the child that he begets.
That he survives intellectually only in the idea or the deed by which he immortalises himself.
That he has no ground for expecting to receive in a future life a recompense or punishment for his present conduct.
That morally good and ill do not exist substantially, absolutely, incontestably, by themselves; that they exist only nominally, relatively, arbitrarily.
That, in fact, there only exist risks, against which man, obeying the law of self-preservation within him, and giving law to matter, seeks to insure himself by the means at his command."

The principles of materialism in combination with socialism have been widely taught in France for about half a century. The creed of the Commune of Paris had been a prevalent and uninterrupted tradition among certain classes during that length of time.

It may be remarked, in the second place, that idealism itself led to materialism. This was especially the case in Germany, where idealism had for a considerable time the field almost entirely to itself. Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, reigned in succession. The sway of the last was for a time very widely and humbly acknowledged. It seemed as if he had founded an empire which would last—as if absolute idealism had been demonstrated to

be the definitive philosophy. But he had not been dead eight years before his empire was divided into three conflicting kingdoms, his disciples into three schools, of which one was theistic, another pantheistic, and the third atheistic. In that short period a number of his disciples had found, or fancied that they found, that absolute idealism was little else than another name for materialism. Michelet and Strauss, while adhering to the distinction between idea and nature, logic and physics, contended that God is personal only in man, and the soul immortal only in God, meaning thereby that God as God is not personal, and real souls not immortal. Feuerbach, Bruno Bauer, Max Stirner, Arnold Ruge, reduced the idea to mere nature and returned to naked atheism. With a strange fanatical sincerity they preached that the universal being of humanity, or the individual man or nature, was the sole object of supreme veneration.

In another way idealism occasioned materialism. Its excesses under the manipulation of Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, and their followers, provoked a reaction in favour of empiricism. Speculation by its audacity, combined with weakness and wordiness, excited aversion. Men whose hopes had been so often deceived by ideas, resolved to put confidence only in facts. They determined to build entirely on the data of the senses, and to follow

exclusively the guidance of the physical sciences. If they had done this they would necessarily have been silent about God, the soul, the moral law, the destiny of man, for these are subjects on which mere sense and physical science have nothing to say. At the same time, they are subjects on which man as a rational and moral being cannot help reflecting. The consequence in Germany was, that many persons took to judging of them from the merely physical science point of view. In the name of this or that mechanical or biological generalisation, they hastened to inform the public that there could be no God, no soul, no freedom, &c. Moleschott, Vogt, Büchner, were in the van of this new movement, which is sometimes called scientific materialism. As all the world knows, it has had extraordinary success.

The chief reason, I remark in the third place, of the prevalence of the so-called scientific materialism has been the rapid and brilliant progress in recent times of the physical, and especially of the biological sciences. All the sciences of material nature—astronomy, natural philosophy, chemistry, geology, physiology, natural history, &c.—have been within the lifetime of the present generation wonderfully enriched with discoveries of facts and laws, and signally productive of inventions which have increased human wealth, comfort, and power. The mental, moral, and theological sciences have

not advanced with anything like the same speed; they can point to no similar harvest of indisputable and benignant results; if they have made any conquests, these have necessarily not been of a kind to dazzle the eye and impress the imagination. It is not surprising, therefore, that physical science should have attracted general and engrossing attention; that it should to a large extent have been cultivated and appreciated in a one-sided manner; that what had been seen to do so much should by many have been fancied to possess unlimited powers. But this is equivalent to saying that it is not surprising that many scientific men should have become materialists, and should have imagined their materialism due to their science, although really due to their ignorance.

The mere study of physical nature does not carry us beyond matter and its processes. Its most elaborate methods can give us no apprehension of God, or soul, or moral sense. So far as mere physical science can discern, "if God had slept a million years, all things would be the same." No telescope or microscope can enable us to detect freewill or any other attribute of mind. Physical science can only tell us of physical objects, physical properties, and physical laws. If no other voice is to be heard, no other witness to be called, the verdict of reason must necessarily be that materialism is true.

The recent progress of the biological sciences, and the great popularity which they enjoy, are also very noteworthy circumstances in this connection. The least observant minds can hardly fail to have been struck with the remarkable manner in which these sciences have come to the front during the last twenty or thirty years. It would be easy to indicate the causes of this, but it is its consequences which concern us. Materialism has clearly gained by it in more ways than one. Naturalists and physiologists are more apt, perhaps, to become materialists than natural philosophers, because it is possible for the former to be greatly distinguished in their vocations without requiring ever seriously to ask what matter is, but hardly for the latter, who have to deal with it in its more general and essential nature. The natural philosopher may denounce as metaphysics the question, What is matter? but he is not only always trying to answer the question, but his answer, as a rule, comes so near that of the metaphysician, that he is rarely a materialist. It is in the form of exaggerations of the influence of physical agencies, and of physiological qualities, that materialism is generally made use of as a principle of scientific explanation; and this is done by those whose studies are least fitted to disclose to them what the natural philosopher, and still more, the speculative thinker, are perfectly aware of, that much

more can be said for a mathematical theory of matter or a mental theory of matter, than for a material theory of mind and history.

The advance of science into the various provinces of the organic world has favoured materialism still more by its influence on the character of the scientific spirit. Regions have now been entered, where to proceed rigidly, according to the rules either of deduction or induction, is as yet often impossible; where not a step can be taken which is not conjectural and venturesome; where at every turn a host of hypotheses must be devised and tested. What an enormous number of hypotheses have been suggested by and associated with the Darwinian doctrine of development, itself still a hypothesis! This state of things is inevitable, but none the less is there a serious danger in it. Men of science are not unlikely in such circumstances to forget what the demands of scientific method really are, and to allow the plausible often to pass for the probable, and the probable for the proved. What may be called the scientific conscience, or, at least, scientific conscientiousness, runs a serious risk of loss and injury. The risk has, I fear, already largely passed into reality. Is it not painfully obvious that a large number of those who profess to give us scientific instruction in biology, ethnology, sociology, &c., have the very vaguest views of what proof is? Is there not a

very large increase of men, esteemed scientific, who cannot distinguish a process of imagination from one of induction? Is there not rapidly rising up a pseudo-scientific school of *savants* whose notions of evidence are essentially different from those of the older type of scientific man represented by a Herschell or Faraday, a Brewster, Forbes, or Thomson? It seems to me that these questions must be answered in the affirmative; and that it is almost exclusively from the new school—the school which draws its resources largely from imagination—that the ranks of the so-called scientific materialism of our day are recruited.

Such causes of the spread of materialism as the following might also be dwelt upon, but it must suffice simply to mention them. (*a*) Political and social dissatisfaction. In some countries and in certain classes this has been a most powerful cause. In proof, I need only refer to secularism in England and to socialism in France and Germany. (*b*) The growth of rationalism and of aversion to the supernatural. Materialism is the natural and logical culmination of this movement. It is only in and through materialism that the elimination of everything supernatural can be reached. (*c*) The predominance of material interests,—of the mercantile spirit,—of the love of wealth, worldly display, and pleasure. The life determines theory even more than theory influences life.

Materialism, it must be added, has another class of causes. It has all the reasons which it can urge on its own behalf. It would be unfair, at this stage, to insinuate that these are either few or feeble. We shall examine them in next lecture.

LECTURE IV.

CONTEMPORARY OR SCIENTIFIC MATERIALISM.

I.

MATERIALISM as a reasoned theory of the universe,—materialism as a philosophy,—is more than two thousand years old. During that long period it has had various fates and fortunes. It has at one time ebbed, and at another flowed; it has suffered many checks and defeats, and has also enjoyed many successes and triumphs. It has never been more than partially and temporarily vanquished; it has sometimes seemed as if it would carry all before it, and leave no foe undestroyed. Its least sympathetic critic must admit that it has shunned neither conflict with the most formidable antagonists nor the scrutiny of the doubting and discussing intellect; that, on the contrary, its course has been a continuous campaign against all kinds of powers and principalities in the name of free thought and scientific truth;

and that when it has prospered, it has not been under the shadow of authority, but in the light of reason. It may be true that whenever it has been widely prevalent, moral, social, and political influences have contributed to its diffusion; that interests and passions have often been as helpful to it as reasons. But the same may be said with equal justice of all systems. No doctrine rests exclusively on intellectual grounds, or triumphs merely in the strength of pure reason. Materialism, it cannot be denied, has constantly appealed to reason, and has prevailed most in epochs characterised by activity of reason. It has not faded and decayed, but grown and flourished, with the increase and expansion of scientific light. It was never more prevalent than in the present day, when the spirit of investigation is everywhere obviously and energetically at work.

Materialism could never have thus lasted and flourished had it not been a very plausible theory. It could never have had the history which it has had unless it had much to say for itself. Make full allowance for interests and passions operating in its favour, yet interests and passions can only sustain and propagate either themselves or any doctrine or movement when they are accompanied by the persuasion that reason is on their side. Nothing is more impotent than mere passion—blind passion,—except it be mere interest

—interest consciously separated from or opposed to truth. Materialism must be able to adduce in its favour arguments which are fitted to impress and convince both the popular and the scientific mind. Its claims to acceptance must rest on grounds which, while not recondite or difficult to understand, are yet of a kind calculated to satisfy many intellects which have been disciplined by physical science.

That this is the case I must endeavour to show. It is clearly impossible to examine in a single lecture even a very few of the most celebrated vindications of contemporary materialism, while it would hardly be fair or satisfactory to discuss merely one of them. It seems necessary, therefore, to treat of contemporary materialism, or, as it is sometimes called, scientific materialism, in a general way. This requires that I should begin by indicating as comprehensively as is consistent with brevity the general character of the argumentation which is employed in its support.

In the first place, then, materialism claims to satisfy better than any other system the legitimate demands of the reason for unity. There cannot be more than one ultimate explanation of things. If the variety of existences in the universe are traced back to two or more causes, the intellect must sooner or later perceive that it has stopped abruptly and left its work incomplete. The two

or more causes which have been reached necessarily limit and condition one another. Whence and why are they thus bounded and associated? The question cannot be evaded. Reason demands an answer to it, and no answer can be found in the several finite and co-ordinate causes themselves; it must be found in a single higher cause on which they are dependent. It is only by reaching unity that we can get above the limits and conditions which are conclusive evidences of dependence. Hence every form of dualism must be rejected as a theory of existence. Only a monistic philosophy can be a true philosophy. But theism, say materialists, is essentially dualistic. It traces the diversity of phenomena in the universe not to one cause, but to two causes. It refers some things to mind, and other things to matter, and maintains that matter and mind are substantially distinct. It leaves us with two principles, and by so doing virtually reduces even the one which it pronounces infinite to something finite, while it renders it impossible for us to conceive of the connection between matter and mind otherwise than as arbitrary. Materialism, on the other hand, is monism. It explains the whole world in terms of matter. It resolves everything in nature—order, organisation, life, sensation, thought, poetry, religion, history—into combinations and motions of matter. It exhibits the universe as a perfectly

homogeneous and coherent system naturally evolved out of a single primary existence. It thus satisfies the demands of philosophy or rational theory for unity. Idealism, it is true, sets up rival pretensions. It professes to start with the self-identity or absolute unity of thought, and to explain matter as a stage in the development or as a phase of the manifestation of thought. But are not its claims obviously less satisfactory? We know nothing of ideas or thoughts except as states of human consciousness, as affections or products of that in ourselves which we call mind. They are special phenomena in the life or experience of men, and men are themselves only a species of natural existences—a class of animals—apparently the last evolved in the terrestrial sphere of things. Man is included in the universe, and ideas are included in man. Reason consequently requires us to seek the explanation of man and ideas in what is common and primary in the universe—matter and motion. To attempt to explain what is ancient by what is recent, the general by the particular, the macrocosm by the microcosm, universal existence by the modifications of highly specialised organisations, is a monstrous ὕστερον πρότερον, a manifest violation of the laws of scientific method. Thought, which is independent of human consciousness, can only be affirmed to exist by an arbitrary act of the individual mind,

and is no real principle, but a mystical assumption; thought, which is dependent on human consciousness, can no more be the unity which accounts for the universe, than the characteristic features of the leaves of a particular kind of tree can be the sole and adequate explanation of the entire vegetable kingdom.

Further, materialism claims to be the only theory which satisfactorily shows that all things have come to be what they are in a truly natural manner. When describing the evolution of the universe from unity to multiplicity, it appeals to no arbitrary or imaginary factor, no principle which is supernatural, no process which transcends or contravenes science. It represents the universe as a self-consistent and perfect system, in which everything that happens follows necessarily from the powers inherent in the system itself. Theism, on the contrary, supposes that the universe in itself is incoherent and imperfect, and that the explanation of many things in it must be sought for out of itself. It conceives of the matter of the world as created; of its powers as derived; of its order as contrived; and of certain events and existences comprehended in it as produced by special acts of Divine interposition. Such a view, say materialists, is essentially anti-scientific. It implicitly denies not only that the world is a scientific unity, but that its phenomena are expli-

cable in a natural manner, whereas the chief end of science is to show that the world is a systematic unity, and that all its phenomena can be naturally explained. Idealism may, indeed, be here again opposed to materialism. Idealism also professes to account in a strictly natural manner for all that is explicable. It starts from the unity of a single principle, and has recourse only to immanent processes, excluding entirely acts of supernatural interference. Idealism, however, it will be replied, breaks down the moment it is brought into real contact with external nature. The supposition of its truth implies that the various operations of the physical world can be explained by the laws of an impersonal and unconscious dialectic; that mechanical, chemical, and organic processes are essentially notional or rational. But this is a hypothesis which physical science will not allow us to entertain. The attempt to interpret mechanical, chemical, and organic facts in connection with it has always resulted either in caricaturing or contradicting the explanations of them given by physical science. In other words, it has invariably led to dualism of the worst kind,—the dualism which consists in irreconcilable antagonism between philosophy and science. Hegelianism supplies us with a striking illustration and proof. Hegel and his followers saw more clearly than the idealists of any other school had done that it was

incumbent upon them to show that nature was a system of which the processes were the stages and expressions of an immanent logical evolution, and they laboured strenuously and ingeniously at the task. What was the result? A so-called philosophy of nature, which physical science is forced to condemn as a gigantic swindle. In the Hegelian philosophy of nature, idealism made evident its scientific bankruptcy. It is very different with materialism, which accepts and incorporates the whole of physical science without alteration or perversion; which founds upon the results of physical research, and tries to extend its principles and apply its methods as far as is legitimately possible.

A closely-connected excellence claimed by materialism is that of being the most intelligible of systems. It is maintained that we never truly understand a fact or process of which we cannot form a distinct and precise image or picture. Whenever a thing is scientifically explained, the mind is enabled to form to itself a definite and clear conception of how that thing came to be what it is. But pseudo-explanations—as, for example, those given of natural phenomena by ancient and scholastic philosophy—are invariably vague and mystical. Can anything, however, except matter and material processes, be definitely and minutely imaged? Can anything else be estimated with quantitative accuracy? Can there be

any *exact* knowledge—*i.e.*, science—so long as material properties are not reached? The materialist answers all these questions in the negative. And, at the same time, he contends that the theistic mode of accounting for the universe by the creative fiat of an Eternal Being is particularly unintelligible. Such a supposition seems to him to be one which cannot, properly speaking, be realised in thought at all. A man may verbally express it, and even fancy that he believes it, yet it is in itself essentially inconceivable.

From preliminary considerations like the foregoing, the materialist may proceed to what is strictly his argument, which still remains to be stated. It consists in maintaining that the facts of nature do not in any case demand for their explanation a principle or principles distinct from matter. The properties of matter are the sole, the direct, and the immediate objects of the senses. They confront the mind from the earliest dawn of consciousness, and are apprehended by it long before self-reflection is elicited. Touch, taste, sight, hearing, and smell, all converge on matter, and constrain us to commence with it. Before we abandon it and its properties, the necessity of having recourse to a distinct substance with distinct properties must be clearly made out. In the inorganic world no such necessity arises. Yet it is a world rich in differences, presenting a vast

variety of constituents and forces, of stages and processes, of colours, sounds, savours, and odours. The objects of one sense are quite unlike those of another, and light, heat, electricity, and magnetism appear to be entirely distinct. But examination discovers everywhere an essential sameness. It was the glory of the atomic or materialistic philosophy of ancient Greece to have recognised that the diversity of things was only secondary; that underneath the phenomenal variety was real identity; that all qualitative distinctions might be resolved into quantitative distinctions. This truth has not only been fully confirmed in modern times, but has been brilliantly supplemented and completed by the great discovery of the correlation of forces. Light, heat, electricity, magnetism, chemical affinity, and mechanical motion, have been ascertained to be convertible. Any one of them may be transformed into any other. They are but modes of the movements which take place among the molecules of matter. They are but the metamorphoses of a common force, which is unchangeable in amouut although variable in quality.

Does the anti-materialist argue that, however the case may stand with the inorganic world, organisation cannot be conceived of as a product of molecular combinations and mechanical forces? Does he contend that there is a chasm or gulf between inorganic and organic nature, and that

materialism fails to bridge over the distance between the one region and the other? It may be replied that this is an argument based not on knowledge but on ignorance, and addressed not to knowledge but to ignorance. Because we do not know that purely physical forces can construct a living cell as we know that they can build up a crystal, we infer that they cannot do the former. But logic warrants no such inference. A solution of continuity, a chasm, in knowledge is no proof that there is a solution of continuity or chasm in nature. Ignorance cannot be legitimately reasoned from as if it were knowledge.

Further, Is not the gap in science being gradually filled up? Is not knowledge as it advances making it apparent that there is no gap in nature at the point indicated? In the light of recent science we cannot but vividly realise that matter is capable of transformations so diversified and wonderful that we must be very cautious before we venture to assign limits to its powers of adaptation, change, and efficiency. The same particle of it may in succession be a constituent of a drop of dew, of an invisible vapour, of a crystal of snow, of a mineral, of the stem, sap, flower, or fruit of a plant, and of the flesh, blood, bone, or brain of man, performing necessarily very different functions in the several instances. Crystallisation is a process scarcely less marvellous in itself and in its

results than growth. Why are we not to believe that in the latter process no less than in the former every molecule is placed in its position not by any external power, whether creative mind or vital principle, but by attractions and repulsions due to the natures of the molecules themselves? If matter can display in special circumstances the structural powers exhibited in crystallisation, why may it not in other, perhaps more complex circumstances, manifest the organic powers witnessed in vegetable and animal growth?

It was until recently supposed that there was a chasm which could not be bridged over between the very chemistry of inorganic and organic bodies, and that no animal substances could be compounded by the chemist. This doctrine is now overthrown. The supposed break in nature which was regarded as indicating the presence and intervention of a distinct principle in organised structures is now found to have been but a blank in our knowledge. "Not many years since," says Mr Spencer, "it was held as certain that the chemical compounds distinguished as organic could not be formed artificially. Now, more than a thousand organic compounds have been formed artificially. Chemists have discovered the art of building them up from the simpler to the more complex; and do not doubt that they will eventually produce the most complex."

That the matter of organic bodies is the same as that of inorganic objects has, of course, a very important bearing on the question whether or not vitality is resolvable into the mechanical properties and chemical processes of matter. What that bearing is I shall leave it to Professor Huxley to state. Treating of the "Physical Basis of Life," he writes: "Plants are the accumulators of the power which animals distribute and dispense. But it will be observed that the existence of the matter of life depends on the pre-existence of certain compounds — namely, carbonic acid, water, and ammonia. Withdraw any one of these three from the world, and all vital phenomena come to an end. They are related to the protoplasm of the plant as the protoplasm of the plant is to that of the animal. Carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen are all lifeless bodies. Of these, carbon and oxygen unite in certain proportions, and under certain conditions, to give rise to carbonic acid; hydrogen and oxygen produce water; nitrogen and hydrogen give rise to ammonia. These new compounds, like the elementary bodies of which they are composed, are lifeless. But when they are brought together under certain conditions, they give rise to the still more complex body, protoplasm, and this protoplasm exhibits the phenomena of life. I see no break in this series of steps in molecular complication, and I am unable

to understand why the language which is applicable to any one term of the series may not be used to any of the others. We think fit to call different kinds of matter carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, and nitrogen, and to speak of the various powers and activities of these substances as the properties of the matter of which they are composed. When hydrogen and oxygen are mixed in a certain proportion, and the electric spark is passed through them, they disappear, and a quantity of water, equal in weight to the sum of their weights, appears in their place. There is not the slightest parity between the passive and active powers of the water and those of the oxygen and hydrogen which have given rise to it. . . . Nevertheless, we do not hesitate to believe that, in some way or another, the properties of the water result from the properties of the component elements of the water. We do not assume that a something called aquosity entered into and took possession of the oxide of hydrogen as soon as it was formed, and then guided the aqueous particles to their places in the facets of the crystal, or amongst the leaflets of the hoar-frost. . . . Does anybody quite comprehend the *modus oper andi* of an electric spark, which traverses a mixture of oxygen and hydrogen? What justification is there, then, for the assumption of the existence in the living matter of a something which has no

representative or correlative in the not-living matter which gave rise to it? What better philosophical status has 'vitality' than 'aquosity'? And why should 'vitality' hope for a better fate than the other 'itys' which have disappeared since Martinus Scriblerus accounted for the operation of the meat-jack by its inherent 'meat-roasting quality,' and scorned the materialism of those who explained the turning of the spit by a certain mechanism worked by the draught of the chimney?"

The mere chemical analysis of inorganic bodies, then, proves that as to substance or matter they are identical with inorganic objects. But science, it is contended, carries us much farther, not merely inferentially from this unity of composition, but directly by demonstrating that what is called vital force is simply mechanical and chemical force transformed through the special conditions under which it acts. The human body is as incapable of generating force as is a steam-engine or a galvanic battery. It only distributes the force which it receives from the world without, and varies its manifestations to the senses. Its every action and process—walking and climbing, pulling and pushing, respiration and digestion, assimilation and excretion — can be shown to be either a mechanical or chemical operation. The force displayed by animals in muscular contractions is entirely derived from the energy stored up in the

food which they consume. The heat which is diffused through their frames is due to chemical combination. Digestion is simply a form of combustion. The circulation of the blood is indubitably a mechanical movement effected by mechanical force. What room is left in organisms for a vital force essentially distinct from the inorganic powers of matter? It is unnecessary to dwell longer on an argument which has been so often presented to the English public in the brilliant expositions of Professor Tyndall.

The significance of the doctrine of evolution must also not be overlooked in the present connection. A few years ago every group of organisms called a species was supposed to have originated in a direct creative act or miracle. Now, this hypothesis is almost universally abandoned. Its place is occupied by Darwinianism or some other form of the development theory. An enormous mass of facts has been collected from astronomy, geology, geography, biology, linguistics, &c., and presented in a light which has convinced most scientific men that from a few organic forms, if not from a single organism, of the simplest kind, all organised beings have been gradually, naturally, and necessarily formed and distributed. But if this theory be true (and those who deny its truth must disprove it), obviously the probability is very great that, as there has been

no supernatural interposition in the course of the evolution of organic beings, so there was none when life and organisation first began to be, and consequently, that no absolutely new principle, no immaterial vital force, was then abruptly and inexplicably inserted into nature.

If it be admitted, on the strength of the foregoing and similar considerations, that even a single vital cell may have originated in the laboratory of nature, under peculiar conditions, from the combination of inorganic elements and the action of chemical and mechanical forces, it can be left to the Darwinian theory of development to explain how that single cell might, in the course of millions on millions of years, by successive infinitesimally minute modifications, be the source from which every plant and animal in the world has derived its life and organisation. In so far as biology accomplishes, or attempts to accomplish, this task, it may be held to be simply a stage or section of the materialistic theory, and materialism to be identical with biological science.

It will be said that there is an impassable barrier between vegetable and animal life—that plants can never have risen into animals, nor animals degenerated into plants. Mr Spencer has thus answered this argument when replying to Dr Martineau: "This is an extremely unfortunate objection to raise. For though there are no

transitions from vegetal to animal life at the places Mr Martineau names (where, indeed, no biologist would look for them), yet the connection between the two great kingdoms of living things is so complete that separation is now regarded as impossible. For a long time naturalists endeavoured to frame definitions such as would, the one include all plants and exclude all animals, and the other include all animals and exclude all plants. But they have been so repeatedly foiled in the attempt that they have given it up. There is no chemical distinction that holds; there is no structural distinction that holds; there is no functional distinction that holds; there is no distinction as to mode of existence that holds. Large groups of the simpler animals contain chlorophyll, and decompose carbonic acid under the influence of light, as plants do. Large groups of the simpler animals, as you may observe in the diatoms from any stagnant pool, are as actively locomotive as the minute creatures classed as animals seen along with them. Nay, among these lowest types of living things it is common for the life to be now predominantly animal, and presently to become predominantly vegetal. The very name *zoospores*, given to germs of *Algæ*, which for a while swim about actively by means of cilia, and presently settling down grow into plant-forms, is given because of this conspicuous community of nature. So complete

is this community of nature, that for some time past many naturalists have wished to establish for these lowest types a sub-kingdom, intermediate between the animal and the vegetal: the reason against this course being, however, that the difficulty crops up afresh at any assumed place where this intermediate sub-kingdom may be supposed to join the other two. Thus the assumption on which Mr Martineau proceeds is diametrically opposed to the conviction of naturalists in general."—Cont. Rev., June 1872.

There remains the barrier of mind or consciousness. The materialist maintains that science proves that matter is, in this case, also an adequate principle of explanation. All the powers of the human mind may be traced to roots in the lower animals. The life of the body and its functions are manifestations of the same generic principle as the so-called life of the soul and its functions. There is only a difference of degree between the highest mental and the lowest vital faculties. There is no absolute break or distinction, but, on the contrary, a continuous progression along the entire psychological line which runs from the *protogenes* and *protamœba* to Plato and Shakespeare, and yet in the two former the motions, which are the evidences of their animality, are scarcely, if at all, distinguishable from the contractions and expansions of certain colloidal

substances. The doctrines of the correlation of forces and of development are as applicable to the explanation of mind as of life. Mind is force, the highest development of force, the force which is accumulated in the brain and nerves; and mental force is as exactly correlated with vital and with physical force as these are with each other. It may be proved by a variety of scientific considerations that all forces come under the same generalisation. Motion, heat, and light, may be transformed into sensation, emotion, and thought; and these may be reconverted into motion, heat, and light. The theory of development has been employed with success by a host of investigators in the elucidation of all kinds of mental phenomena. The result has been to show that the phenomena peculiar to human psychology may be resolved into simpler states, and that these may be traced backwards and downwards until the primordial properties of matter are reached.

The argument for materialism may now, perhaps, be fitly concluded in the words of Professor Huxley: "I take it to be demonstrable that it is utterly impossible to prove that anything whatever may not be the effect of a material and necessary cause, and that human logic is equally incompetent to prove that any act is really spontaneous. A really spontaneous act is one which, by the assumption, has no cause; and the attempt

to prove such a negative as this, is, on the very face of the matter, absurd. And while it is thus a philosophical impossibility to demonstrate that any given phenomenon is not the effect of a material cause, any one who is acquainted with the history of science will admit that its progress has, in all ages, meant, and now more that ever means, the extension of the province of what we call matter and causation, and the concomitant gradual banishment from all regions of human thought of what we call spirit and spontaneity. And as surely as every future grows out of the past and present, so will the physiology of the future gradually extend the realm of matter and law until it is coextensive with knowledge, with feeling, and with action. The consciousness of this great truth weighs like a nightmare, I believe, upon many of the best minds of these days. They watch what they conceive to be the progress of materialism, in such fear and powerless anger as a savage feels when, during an eclipse, the great shadow creeps over the face of the sun. The advancing tide of matter threatens to drown their souls; the tightening grasp of law impedes their freedom; they are alarmed lest man's moral nature be debased by the increase of his wisdom."[1]

[1] See Appendix XV.

II.

A general view of the argument in favour of materialism has now been laid before you. My next duty is to examine whether or not the reasoning which it includes and involves is valid.

Is it true, then, I ask, that materialism satisfies the legitimate demands of the reason for unity? I grant that reason, when in quest of an ultimate explanation of things, imperatively demands unity, and that only a monistic theory of the universe can deserve the name of a philosophy. While aware that the desire for unity has given rise to countless aberrations, and that it needs to be carefully watched lest it create factitious unities when it fails to find real unities, I yet unhesitatingly acknowledge that it originates in, and is the expression of, the very constitution of rational thought, which can never regard a number of co-ordinate causes as other than a group of secondary causes. But the question is, Is materialism monism? or, in other words, Is matter one? I answer, No. Matter cannot possibly be conceived of as properly one. Materialism is necessarily multitudinism, and as such must inevitably be pronounced an essentially unphilosophical and irrational hypothesis.

The world presented to us by the senses and

immediate consciousness is certainly not one, and is held by nobody to be one. It is a vast complex of objects, agencies, and conditions—stars, stones, plants, animals, light, heat, electricity, thoughts, feelings, volitions. Its contents may have a unity imparted to them by generalisation, but merely a unity which is given to them from without and for a purpose,—a unity which depends on the point of view from which things are considered. There may be any number of such unities; there may be even more of them than there are things. Real unity cannot be thus reached. Nor is it thus but by analysis that materialists seek it. Things may be resolved into their elements; compounds may be reduced to simples. This process of analysis might conceivably take us far towards a sort of unity in a strictly scientific manner. I cannot indeed admit its sufficiency to take us quite even to the unity of a single physical element, for no such element, no single entirely uncompounded element, can ever produce another. Two physical elements may produce a third, but no one element can ever produce anything. It must for ever remain itself. There is, however, no obvious reason why analysis should not have proved that there are only two, or at least a very few, physical elements, out of which have been formed by successive combinations all material substances, the so-called elements included. But it has in reality

done nothing of the kind; it has not taken us a step towards unity. The ancient Greek philosophers believed the elements of matter to be far fewer than do our modern chemists. It is just the reverse of the truth to affirm that the tendency of physical research has been to demonstrate the unity or simplicity of matter. Chemical science may display that tendency in the future, but it has not displayed it in the past. Even if we are content to ignore mind, to treat psychical elements as if they had no existence, scientific analysis takes us to about sixty-four ultimates instead of to one ultimate. Had the number been much smaller—had it been only two—it would still have been a result incompatible with a materialistic monism. Reason cannot acquiesce even in two ultimates, although much less, of course, in sixty-four.

It may very well be that many of the substances which chemists at present call elementary are not simple. Spectrum analysis and the phenomena of allotropy suggest the conclusion that some of them are complex. It is free to any one to conjecture that they have all been formed by compounding and recompounding absolutely indecomposable and homogeneous units. But it is free to no one to put this forward as more than a conjecture, or to conceal that the analysis of the so-called elementary substances might result not in dimin-

ishing but in increasing the number of substances which would have to be admitted, at least provisionally, as ultimate. In the present state of our knowledge this is just as legitimate a conjecture as the opposite. We have as yet no properly scientific reason for believing that the elements of matter are really fewer than they are supposed to be. We are very far, indeed, from being entitled to affirm that there is only one physical element. But until this conclusion is established, the original of the materialist cannot even be regarded as *one in kind.* His matter is not all of the same sort. It is essentially a multiplicity of things specifically distinct. It cannot, consequently, be the basis of a monistic system of thought.

Let me, however, make to the materialist an enormous concession, and one to which he is not entitled. Let me suppose him to have done what he has certainly not done—to have proved what he has merely conjectured—namely, that there exists but a single truly elementary physical substance. Let me, further, not press him with any of the perplexing questions which suggest themselves as to the nature of the wholly undifferentiated, absolutely homogeneous matter which his single primordial element must be. Matter, let it be granted, then, is reducible to a single physical constituent. That proves matter to be of *one kind or sort.* But does it prove it to be *one?* This is

the decisive question, and obviously the only possible answer is a negation. A pure, homogeneous, physical element is not in the least a real unity. It is an aggregate of parts, each of which is as much a substance as the whole. You may take a portion of it from one place and another portion of it from another place—a yard, say, or a mile distant—and these portions may be perfectly alike, yet they are also perfectly distinct. The one is not the other. They are not identical; not one. A physical element, therefore, although entirely pure and unmixed, is necessarily a multitude. It consists of as many substances as it consists of atoms. Real unity is precisely what it has not and cannot have in itself. To talk of materialistic monism is, therefore, as self-contradictory as to talk of a circular square. It is a kind of speech which betrays intellectual bankruptcy.

The unsatisfactoriness of materialism as regards the demand of reason for unity becomes only the more evident when we take into consideration the fact that force is always combined with matter. This fact is disputed by no one, but opinions differ widely as to how matter and force are combined. Is matter the cause of force? Is force a result of matter? An answer in the affirmative is, perhaps, the only one which materialism can consistently give. It is an answer, however, which satisfies the principle of unity at the ex-

pense of the principle of causality, and is, besides, inherently unintelligible. How can matter be the cause of force or any other effect unless it have force to cause the effect? A matter which produces force without force is a cause which is destitute of power to be a cause. Matter which is mere matter—matter which is antecedent to force — is matter which explains nothing; and that such matter should, in a universe of which the original principle is matter, be always and everywhere accompanied by force, is a greater mystery than any contained in theology or metaphysics.

Hence the majority of materialists have preferred to represent matter and force as at once inseparable and co-ordinate. According to this view both are ultimate, and the one is not related to the other as cause and effect. But what, then, becomes of the unity or monism of the materialist? It vanishes, and in its place there emerges a duality by which he cannot fail to be embarrassed. But the difficulty which he has now to encounter has been so accurately and comprehensively stated by Professor Calderwood, that quotation will completely serve my purpose. "The perplexity of the problem under a materialistic theory is not lessened but increased when duality of origin is assigned, by introducing Force in addition to Material Substance. Duality of existence, with co-

eternity of duration, involves perplexity sufficient to bar logical procedure. This duality of existence implies diversity of nature and mutual restriction; and these two, diversity and limitation, raise anew the problem which they were meant to solve. The explanation needs to be explained. Again, matter and force are postulated primarily to account for motion, but in accounting for motion, they are proved insufficient to account for existence. That which needs to have force exerted upon it in order to be moved is not self-sufficient, and the same is true of the force which needs matter on which to exert its energy." — Hand-Book of Moral Philosophy, pp. 235, 236.

Force may be conceived of as neither the effect of matter nor co-ordinate with it, but its cause. This is a not uncommon view, and much may be urged in its support. But obviously, if it be true, materialism is erroneous. Matter is in this case not what is first in the universe—force is before it; and indeed matter, when thus reduced to a mere effect of force acting on sense, is virtually abolished as a substance. The universe of matter is resolved into a universe of force. The force may, however, be conceived of as merely physical force. Would this universe of physical force be a unity? Certainly not. As physical force—force indissolubly associated with a material manifestation—it could merely be *force of one kind, not one force.* It must

necessarily be as divisible, as multiple, as its material manifestation. The force in one place could not but be distinct from the force in another place. A world of physical force must be a world which is simply an aggregate of physical forces.

It follows from what has been said that the world can have no real unity either in mere matter or mere physical force. If reason is to find the unity it seeks, it must go farther and deeper; it must not stop short of an immaterial cause of matter, of an indivisible source of divisible forces, of a power which can give to what is essentially multiple the unity of arrangement and plan. Monism can have no other solid basis than the truth that the universe "lives and moves and has its being" in a single creative and providential Mind, "of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things."

We have next to examine whether or not the claim of materialism to be a system which proceeds on principles that are strictly natural and scientific, is well founded. It seems to me that it is not. One of its principles is that there is nothing in the universe except matter, and what is explicable by matter; that to refer to anything else as a cause is to appeal to an arbitrary or imaginary factor. Now, whatever the affirmation here may be as a conclusion, it is plainly irrational and unscientific as a principle. The man who

begins investigation with it comes to nature with an *à priori* dogma, and insists that she shall only tell him what he already wishes to believe. That is not scientific, but essentially anti-scientific. Genuine science demands that nature shall be allowed to speak for herself and be believed, whether she teaches that the principles required for the explanation of her phenomena are few or many. No factor ought to be pronounced arbitrary or imaginary until proved to be not required for the explanation of facts. The materialist, if he would be truly scientific, must be content to wait until he has finished his argumentation against the spiritualist and the theist before he affirms that to trace effects to God or the soul is to appeal to an arbitrary factor. But where are there materialists to be found who are willing to do anything of the kind? I know of none. Almost without exception, materialists assume at the outset that science is bound to recognise only material causes, and their whole argumentation is largely dependent on this assumption.

A second principle of materialism is that the higher must be explained by the lower, the superior by the inferior. Comte was perhaps the first clearly to point out that this is the universal and distinctive characteristic of materialism. It accounts for force by matter, for the orderly by the unorderly, for the organic by the inorganic, for

life by chemistry and mechanism, for thought, feeling, and volition, by molecular motions in the brain and nerves. It assumes that this is the peculiarly and exclusively scientific method of procedure. But the assumption is unwarranted so long as the anti-materialist can argue on rational grounds that this so-called scientific procedure is a continuous violation of the principle of causality. And this, I need scarcely say, is precisely what the anti-materialist maintains. He undertakes to show that, at every fresh stage in the materialistic course of explanation, there is more in the alleged effect than in the assigned cause, or, in other words, that there is something in the so-called effect which is traced to no cause, and consequently, that something is implied to be produced by nothing. Materialism professes to accept the axiom that "nothing comes from nothing" more strictly than any other system; but its critics complain that the principle of which it makes the most frequent application is that the greater may be caused by the less—that something may come from nothing. The materialist declares his inability to believe in creation by the infinite power of an infinite mind, but he seems to his opponents to display a wonderful capacity for believing in a whole series of creations out of nothing and by nothing. It is not for me to pronounce at present whether this accusation be well founded or ill

founded. It is sufficient for my immediate purpose that materialism can have no claim to be considered scientific until the charge is disproved. There can be nothing scientific in continuously violating the law of causality.

Yet some persons seem to see nothing irrational even in such violation. The author of a recently published work, entitled 'A Candid Examination of Theism'—an author who writes under the *nom de plume* of "Physicus"—quotes these words of Locke: "Whatsoever is first of all things must necessarily contain in it, and actually have, at least, all the perfections that can ever after exist; nor can it ever give to another any perfection that it hath not actually in itself, or at least in a higher degree; it necessarily follows that the first eternal being cannot be matter." He then adds, "Now, as this presentation is strictly formal, I shall meet it with a formal reply, and this reply consists in a direct contradiction. It is simply untrue that 'whatsoever is first of all things must necessarily contain in it, and actually have, at least, all the perfections that can ever after exist;' or that it can never 'give to another any perfection that it hath not actually in itself.' In a sense, no doubt, a cause contains all that is contained in its effects; the latter content being potentially present in the former. But to say that a cause already contains actually all that its effects may afterwards so con-

tain, is a statement which logic and common-sense alike condemn as absurd." — (P. 21.) Indeed! The affirmation of Locke which is here met with a "direct contradiction," and pronounced "simply untrue," may not have been unexceptionably expressed, but it just means that every cause must be a sufficient cause, — that a weight of four pounds, for example, cannot balance one of ten pounds; and he who meets it with a direct contradiction needs, of course, no contradiction, especially if he has failed to perceive that a cause is only a cause in so far as it displays *actual* power and perfection. It is curious, however, that the writer mentioned should be able to quote an argument to the same effect from Mr J. S. Mill's 'Essay on Theism.' We there read: "Apart from experience, and arguing on what is called reason —that is, on supposed self-evidence—the notion seems to be that no causes can give rise to products of a more precious or elevated kind than themselves. But this is at variance with the known analogies of nature. How vastly nobler and more precious, for instance, are the vegetables and animals than the soil and manure out of which, and by the properties of which, they are raised up! The tendency of all recent speculation is towards the opinion that the development of inferior orders of existence into superior, the substitution of greater elaboration and higher organ-

isation for lower, is the general rule of nature. Whether this is so or not, there are at least in nature a multitude of facts bearing that character, and this is sufficient for the argument."—(P. 152.) One asks with astonishment, Is it really meant to be said that vegetables and animals are wholly caused by soil and manure? Have the sun and parent vegetables and animals, and many other adjacent and antecedent agencies, contributed nothing to their perfections? No sane person has ever fancied that there may not be more in an effect than in any of its partial causes. The question is, Can there be more in an effect than in its complete cause, whether that be a single cause or the sum of a multitude of partial causes? Reason affirms it to be self-evident that there cannot, and not a fact or analogy in nature is at variance with the affirmation. The latest and most elaborate result of development can have no perfection which it has not derived from some of the agents which have concurred in its formation. But whatsoever is first of all things must be the whole cause of all things. Secondary causes cannot add to what it contributes, since they only impart of what they have themselves received from it. Therefore it must necessarily contain in itself all the perfections that can ever after exist. To deny this is wholly to set aside the law of causality. It is not what "Physicus" calls it, a "childishly easy refuta-

tion" of Locke's argument, but it is childish in every respect.

The materialist believes that he takes up a specially respectful attitude towards science, and defers more to its teaching than does the theist. But this, again, is what cannot be granted. The materialist goes to science with a theory which he ought to be content to derive from it, and which must make it impossible for him to study such departments of knowledge as psycholgoy, ethics, and history — not to speak of theology — in an unprejudiced and liberal manner. He cannot but be as incapable of impartiality in estimating the teachings of the mental sciences as the idealist in judging of the doctrines of the physical sciences. The theist, in reality, occupies a far more advantageous position. He can be both just and deferential alike towards the physical and mental sciences; he is committed to no one mode of explaining phenomena; he is bound to accept the facts and laws of all science just as science gives them; and when science shows him that God has operated in nature, mind, or history, otherwise than he imagined, he can, without having any reason to be ashamed, because in perfect consistency with his principles, modify his theology in accordance with the new information which he has received. If force be not explicable by matter— the living by the dead — species by evolution—

mental phenomena by physical properties,—materialism must be erroneous. Were all these positions proved, theism would not be disproved.

The view which is expressly maintained by some, and tacitly assumed by many materialists —the view that only explanations which can be subjected to the verification of the senses, or represented in imagination as processes which the senses might trace if their powers were sufficiently magnified, are truly scientific—is also untenable. Genuine explanation requires, of course, definite thought, and is generally attained in regard to physical things only with the discovery of exact quantitative relations; but thought, which merely recalls or represents sense, is seldom definite, and even in physical investigation the path of progress is from sense towards pure thought. Scientific comprehension is only attained when intelligence has got beyond figurate or pictorial conception, and has freed itself from the material and sensuous elements contained in immediate perception. Scarcely any cause has had a more perverting influence on the study of mental and moral facts than the bias which the mind derives from its familiar converse with the objects of sense to assimilate all other objects to these, and to think of them under material categories, or according to material analogies. The philosopher and the theologian require to be constantly on their guard against being deluded

by the subtle operation of the same cause, seeing that a multitude of religious and speculative beliefs which reason must reject flow from this source. Materialism undoubtedly owes much of its success to habitually addressing the mind in figurate language and through sensuous imagery. Instead of convincing the understanding by strictly relevant reasons, it meets at one and the same time its craving for satisfaction and its aversion to exertion, by hypotheses agreeable to the imagination, because capable of being easily represented in a pictorial or sensuous form. But in the eyes of thoughtful men, this, the great secret of its power, is an evidence of its scientific worthlessness. Materialism must ever be plausible to the popular understanding, but simply, so its opponents think, because it is content to stop short at the plausible and popular.

III.

Thus far I have only dealt with the generalities of materialism. It is now necessary to come to particulars.

The materialist supposes that there is a matter which precedes every form of mind, and exists independently of all thought. But can he prove this? It requires to be proved, because it seems to many untrue, and even contradictory. Mere

matter—matter in itself—matter as an exclusively objective fact, or as wholly independent of intelligence,—is, they hold, unknown and unknowable matter. It is no more possible, so they tell us, to think of such matter than to think of a centreless circle, or a stick with merely one end. The only matter which by any stretch of mind can be conceived or imagined as even a possible object of knowledge,—thus runs the averment,—is matter which is not alone, but accompanied by mind; matter which is relative to and dependent on mind. But if this be true, on what ground can the materialist maintain that there is any such thing as the matter of which he talks? If that which he represents as the sum and substance and explanation of all existences is an absolute contradiction in thought, what authority has he for attributing to it real being and wonderful powers? If matter is never known and cannot be known to have an independent existence, how does he reach the conclusion that it has an independent existence?

This argument, familiar to the students of Professor Ferrier's 'Institutes of Metaphysic,' completely blocks the path of the materialist, so that he must remove it before he can proceed. Now I pronounce no opinion on the absolute validity of the argument. It signifies not for my present purpose whether it proves merely the truism that

matter cannot be known without a mind to know it, or conclusively demonstrates that matter cannot exist without some mind to perceive or think of it. It is sufficient to remark that there appears to be but one way by which it may conceivably be shown that the argument does not establish all that it was meant to do, and that this way is clearly not open to the materialist. Although the knowledge of matter must always be accompanied by a knowledge of mind, matter and mind may, with at least an appearance of reason, be argued to be known as distinct and independent, and therefore, to be distinct and independent. But the materialist is obviously precluded from thus arguing, because his materialism necessarily involves sensationalism, and sensationalism necessarily signifies that all knowledge of matter is dependent on the particular constitution of the senses of the individual. Matter can be for the materialist merely what it is felt to be, or what it is imagined to be in consequence of being felt. He cannot consistently pretend to any knowledge of it as it is in itself, or to any knowledge of its properties as independent objective facts. The doctrine of real presentationism is incompatible with a materialistic theory of the nature of knowledge; and yet, where this doctrine is not maintained, matter cannot even be seriously argued to precede or to exist apart from mind.

The materialist, then, supposes that there exists a matter which is merely objective or entirely independent of thought; but he has no reply to give to any one who maintains that he can only know matter as that which is inseparably associated with mind, and essentially dependent upon thought, or, in other words, that the matter by which he pretends to explain intelligence is matter which presupposes intelligence. He thus starts with a fatal self-contradiction, from which he cannot free himself by any alteration or amendment of his views of matter short of entire renunciation of the doctrine that matter is the absolute first of existence—the original of all things. He may cease to think of matter *per se* as possessed of definiteness and form—he may drop out of his conception of it one distinctive property after another—he may resolve it into conditioned, and even into unconditioned force,—but the self-contradiction will cling to him at the last as firmly as at the first. To get rid of it he may commit mental suicide by casting himself into the abyss of the "unknowable;" but it will hold on by him there more triumphantly than ever, and will not be shaken off until he confess that the unknowable is at least known not to be devoid of knowledge any more than of force.

Materialism, I remark next, affirms that matter is eternal without justifying the assertion. Materialism is manifestly bound to prove the eternity

of matter, since all that is distinctive of the system rests on this presupposition. Unless matter be eternal it must have been originated. The whole argumentation of the theist in support of the doctrine of the Divine existence is designed to show that the world is not eternal, not self-existent. That there is something eternal and self-existent, the atheist, pantheist, and theist, the materialist and the spiritualist, agree in acknowledging. None of them calls upon the others to explain the mystery of self-existence. Every sane mind receives that mystery and credits other minds with doing the same. Doubt and difference of opinion are only possible as to what is self-existent or eternal. Is it mind or matter, personal or impersonal, knowable or unknowable? The theist believes it to be mind, and produces what he deems relevant and conclusive evidence to prove that it is mind. What evidence has the materialist to the contrary, and for believing that matter is that which is self-existent and eternal?

Many materialists have the candour to acknowledge that they have none whatever. They confess entire ignorance on the subject. They are ready to accept as a true statement of their position that made by Professor Tyndall on a celebrated occasion. "If you ask the materialist whence is this matter of which we have been discoursing, who or what divided it into molecules,

who or what impressed upon them this necessity of running into organic forms, he has no answer. Science is also mute in reply to these questions. But if the materialist is confounded and science rendered dumb, who else is entitled to answer? To whom has the secret been revealed? Let us lower our heads and acknowledge our ignorance, one and all. Perhaps the mystery may resolve itself into knowledge at some future day. The process of things upon this earth has been one of amelioration. It is a long way from the iguanodon and his contemporaries to the president and members of the British Association. And whether we regard the improvement from the scientific or from the theological point of view, as the result of progressive development, or as the result of successive exhibitions of creative energy, neither view entitles us to assume that man's present faculties end the series—that the process of amelioration stops at him. A time may therefore come when this ultra-scientific region by which we are now enfolded, may offer itself to terrestrial, if not to human, investigation." Now, what is the precise meaning of these words? Is it not that although until the far-distant future age arrives when there are beings on the earth as much superior to the president and members of the British Association as these are to the iguanodon and his contemporaries, no reason be found for believing that matter

is eternal, self-active, and endowed with the promise and potency of all order, life, and thought, yet men may even now speak and reason as if they were quite certain that it is? But surely, if this be what it means, "the long way from the iguanodon and his contemporaries to the president and the members of the British Association" has been as conspicuously one of progress in absurdity as in science. A man who has no reason for believing that matter is eternal, must not merely bow his head and acknowledge his ignorance, but he must cease ascribing eternity to matter, and confess that he has no right to be a materialist. If, notwithstanding his avowed ignorance and the evidence adduced to prove matter created, he habitually assumes that matter is eternal, what else can be said than that he arbitrarily chooses to believe matter eternal, because he would otherwise be bound to believe it created?

How is it that materialists are in general willing to take their stand in such a position? Is it because they cannot find one more tenable? In other words, is it because the only reasons that can be given for believing matter eternal are worse than none? Perhaps it is. At all events, the only reasons that have been given are so weak that the slightest examination is sufficient completely to discredit them.

A German materialist (Dr Löwenthal) gives the

following as an argument: "What has no end can have no beginning. What cannot be destroyed can also not be created. Matter cannot be destroyed, and consequently cannot be created; it is without end, and therefore likewise without beginning—is eternal." But what right can any person have to assume that "what has no end can have no beginning"? The words I have just quoted may have no end, but certainly they had a beginning; they may be eternal *a parte post* although they were not eternal *a parte ante*, but originated with Dr Löwenthal on a definite day not many years ago. The assertion that "matter cannot be destroyed" needs proof, yet receives none. There is no warrant for saying more than that matter cannot be destroyed by natural powers and processes. There can be no warrant, therefore, for inferring more than that matter cannot be created by natural powers and processes. But this inference is scarcely worth the trouble of drawing. It is unnecessary to take any roundabout way to arrive at so easily accessible a truth as that matter cannot create or destroy itself. But the gulf between this plain truth and the assertion that matter cannot be created or destroyed is immense, although materialists have pretended to identify them, being unable to find a passage from the one to the other.

Büchner, Moleschott, and some other material-

ists, teach that physical science has proved that matter is absolutely incapable of increase or diminution, creation or annihilation. Physical science has done nothing of the kind. It refuses to draw absolute conclusions. It carefully abides within the conditions of experience and experiment. It certifies that matter is undestroyed by any of the processes of nature or any of the arts of man, and it infers that what has not destroyed it in the past will not destroy it in the future. It disowns, however, the inference that matter cannot be destroyed or created even by infinite power. It cannot afford so glaringly to violate the laws of logic. It does not pretend to be able to tell what infinite power can do, and still less what it cannot do.

The assertion which Büchner and Moleschott erroneously represent as a generalisation of science, Mr Herbert Spencer far more erroneously pronounces "an *à priori* cognition of the highest order." Of course, neither this nor any other cognition of matter is an *à priori* cognition even of the lowest order. Matter is only known *à posteriori,* and as essentially contingent. No number of the uniformities of experience relative to the nature and properties of matter has been shown to produce one of those absolute uniformities of thought which are entitled to be called necessary or *à priori* truths. We may not be able to conceive a process of creation, the manner in

which the quantity of matter might be absolutely increased, nor a process of annihilation, the manner in which the quantity of matter might be absolutely diminished, but we have no difficulty in conceiving that there should be more or less matter in the universe than there is. It requires no great stretch of imagination to suppose the whole of empty space filled with matter, or no matter at all in space. He who denies that one can truly think the quantity of matter to be increased or diminished—that one can believe that matter has been created or that it will be annihilated—has allowed his reason to be too much influenced by the impressions of sense, and has signally confused empirical generalisation with necessary truth.

The reason most commonly given for regarding matter as eternal is that its creation is inconceivable. Is, then, creation inconceivable? Not in the sense of essentially unthinkable,—not in the sense that a centreless circle or triangular square cannot be conceived,—not in the only sense which would fix creation down as impossible. Is it even inconceivable in the sense of necessarily unimaginable by the human mind? It may be so. Perhaps the mind of man with its present faculties could not be made to comprehend the nature of an act of creation. But we have no right to affirm that such is the case. Its proof would, in fact, require the very knowledge which is pronounced to be

unattainable. If the mind cannot prove creation to be inherently absurd or self-contradictory, it cannot be entitled to pronounce it unknowable; for it knows no other unknowable than the absurd, and it can have no right to affirm anything to be unknowable which it does not know to be so. To know anything to be unknowable is a self-contradiction, unless by the unknowable is meant merely the self-contradictory. We certainly know far too little about the nature of matter—if there be any matter except the manifestation of force to mind—to assert that we could not be made to understand its creation. We are merely entitled to say that we do not understand it, and cannot understand it until our knowledge of the nature of matter is greatly increased. The inconceivability of creation is, in fact, no real unthinkableness, but the natural effect of a weakness of imagination which is amply explained by inexperience and ignorance. It is no reason whatever for setting aside the arguments urged by the theist in favour of the belief in creation. The materialist himself believes in a multitude of facts which are in the same sense equally inconceivable.

It may be remarked, in the next place, that materialism is inconsistent with its own theory of knowledge. It implies that all knowledge is obtained through the bodily organs of sense; that we know nothing except what our senses tell us;

that the limits of sensible experience are the limits of knowledge. Yet it starts, and necessarily starts, with assertions manifestly at variance with this doctrine. It affirms either the existence of atoms or the infinite divisibility of matter. Have atoms ever been reached by any sense? No, they are inaccessible to sense. Can sense prove the infinite divisibility of matter? No; the very notion of sense possessing such a power is absurd. Then, matter is affirmed to be eternal. But is eternity an object of sense? Has any materialist seen or touched eternity? Has any creature ever had an eternal sensation? Again, no. The very men who assert that matter is eternal are found at other times assuring us that we have no idea of eternity, on the ground that all our knowledge is derived from sensation. What sort of system is it, however, which is thus inconsistent and self-contradictory at its very foundation? Surely it is one little entitled to be considered either satisfactory or scientific.

Again, materialism, as I have already indicated, has no reasonable account to give us of force. It is not required, of course, to give us an account of the absolute nature of force in itself. Force is known only through its effects — only from experience. More, therefore, is not asked from materialism than that it shall give an intelligible, non-contradictory view of the relation of force to

matter. But instead of meeting this demand it represents their relationship only in ways which reason and science refuse to sanction. The majority of materialists assert that force is inherent in matter; that matter is essentially active; that matter and force are inseparable, and have coexisted from all eternity. But this assertion is the denial of a fundamental law of physical science —the law stated by Newton in the words, "Every body perseveres in its state of rest or of moving uniformly in a straight line, except in so far as it is made to change that state by external forces." This law is conclusively proved, both experimentally and by the consequences involved in denying it. If true, however, matter is in itself inert, inactive, without power of originating motion or producing change; and the view of the relation of matter and force, assumed as axiomatically evident by a host of materialists, is anti-scientific and erroneous in the highest degree. If true, the argument of Aristotle for a first mover is plainly a very strong one. If a body cannot move itself it must be moved by a cause distinct from itself, and this external cause, if a body, must be moved by another cause, and so on in a regress which, not to be *ad infinitum*, must end in a cause which is self-acting, and consequently not a body. It has been attempted to meet this argument by affirming that matter is endowed with a property of attraction,

in virtue of which, while each separate molecule of matter is inert, two molecules are active, each being a cause of motion in the other. But the reply is inadequate, as it ignores two important considerations. The first is, that inertia and attraction are not facts of the same rank or value. Inertia is presupposed in all the phenomena of attraction, is implied in every correct conception of mechanical motion, and can clearly neither be eliminated from the notion of matter nor reduced to any simpler property of matter. Attraction, on the other hand, as a cause of gravity, as an efficient property of matter, is an occult and hypothetical quality, in the existence of which few men of science very seriously believe, although they feel themselves incompetent to displace it by any more plausible conjecture. The vast majority of physicists will readily subscribe Newton's words to Bentley: "You sometimes speak of gravity as essential and inherent to matter. Pray, do not ascribe that notion to me; for the cause of gravity is what I do not pretend to know." Many of them will not refuse assent even to his much stronger statement: "That gravity should be innate, inherent, and essential to matter, so that one body may act upon another at a distance through a *vacuum*, without the mediation of anything else, by and through which their action and force may be conveyed from one to another, is to me so great

an absurdity, that I believe no man who has in philosophical matters a competent faculty of thinking, can ever fall into it." The materialist is not entitled, then, to assume that the phenomena ascribed to attraction will not in process of time be explained by the general laws of motion. Let us suppose, however, that attraction, instead of being thus proved to be a useless fiction, is ascertained to be a real property and efficient cause. What is it precisely that in this case has been established? Only my second consideration — only a conclusion which materialism cannot accept. Matter is thereby proved to be a something which cannot have its reason of existence in itself. No molecule, on this supposition, is what it is, or is moved as it is, of itself. The cause of the position and state of each molecule is out of itself in all the other molecules. This dependence of each upon all must have a reason which embraces all, yet which can neither be in the parts, since each part is dependent—nor in the whole, since it can have nothing which it has not derived from the parts which compose it.

The hypothesis that matter is essentially active seems not to be tenable. Is there any more plausible view as to the relation of matter to force which the materialist can adopt? Apparently not. The conjecture which has sometimes been

thrown out, and which Dr Löwenthal has deliberately adopted—that force is not essential to matter, but the result of its aggregation—is too ridiculous for discussion. Force can no more be accounted for by aggregation than the strength of a horse can be accounted for by the motion of the cart which it draws. Aggregation presupposes, and therefore cannot explain, force. But no other supposition appears to remain except that matter has the power of putting itself in motion,—has in some degree the faculty of volition or self-determination. This, the supposition which Epicurus and Lucretius adopted, is growing in favour with modern materialists. Anthropomorphism in physics was probably never more prevalent than at present, especially among those who denounce anthropomorphism in theology. Confidently deny freewill to man and confidently ascribe it to atoms, and you stand a good chance just now of being widely acknowledged as a great physical philosopher, and are sure at least of being honoured as an "advanced thinker." But nonsense does not cease to be nonsense when it becomes popular. The notion of an atom of matter putting itself in motion is a still more glaring contradiction of the law of inertia than an atom eternally and necessarily active. It also confounds matter and mind, and even nature and miracle. It may be taught as a truth of physical science, but it is

in reality a delusion due to metaphysical nightmare.[1]

Further, materialism leaves unexplained and inexplicable the order, laws, and harmony in nature. Material elements chaotically combined and material forces working blindly, atoms jostling together at random and powers unconditioned and uncorrelated by intelligence with a view to an end, cannot be rationally thought of as producing these things. The universe is a result which implies that its hosts of constituents have been prepared and arranged, and that the hosts of forces associated with them have been directed and marshalled, by a Divine Intelligence. Order universally reigns, where elements out of which confusion might have arisen and might still arise are present and abundant; all things proceed under the influence of laws, unfailing and unerring, which apply at once to the minutest part and to the mightiest whole; contingencies are constantly provided for by a system of compensations of the most elaborate and exquisite description; and of these facts, as I endeavoured to show when treating of the design argument, the materialist can either give no explanation or devises explanations which are futile in the extreme.

Is life also a fact which presents a problem that materialism cannot solve? Is there a chasm be-

[1] See Appendix XVI.

tween the dead and the living which cannot be bridged over by mere matter and its laws? The debate on this question is at present so extremely keen that its importance in a religious reference is, it seems to me, in danger of being exaggerated. Materialism must be refuted before we reach this point, if it is ever to be refuted. Were spontaneous generation proved, materialism would remain as far from established as before. Those who are certain that there is a God may with perfect composure leave it to science to ascertain under what conditions He has caused life to appear. In fact, the question as to the mode of the origination of life, although of immense scientific interest, is of very subordinate religious significance. It is, further, a question which is often answered in a dogmatic and anti-scientific spirit. Many assert that it is absolutely impossible that life should originate from the interaction of molecular forces, while materialists in general demand that the contrary should be conceded from the outset. Both parties are in error. We cannot tell what is possible or impossible in such a case, prior to a comprehensive knowledge, such as science seeks to attain, of all that actually is. We have even no right, it seems to me, either to deny or to admit that it is conceivable that under certain conditions life may originate in inorganic matter. Our power of conception is dependent

on our means of conception, our data, our acquaintance with relevant facts. What we cannot conceive to-day science may make conceivable to-morrow; but we must not anticipate to-day what belongs to to-morrow.

Let us appeal, then, merely to facts and science. Do they afford any grounds for the materialistic explanation of the origin of life? Certainly not. So far as our knowledge extends, there is not a single fact to warrant the hypothesis that life has originated from mere matter, from what is inert and inactive. The spontaneous generation of life from the lifeless has often been asserted, and has sometimes been attempted to be proved, but undoubtedly the verdict of science is that organisms arise only from organisms, that life is only produced by that which lives. Endeavours like those of Crosse, and Pouchet, and Bastian, to establish the contrary, have only demonstrated their own futility, and increased the probability that *omne vivum ex vivo* is a law of nature which has no exceptions. No man has ever changed any inorganic matter into a living vegetable without the help of a pre-existing vegetable germ; nor vegetable matter into animal, without an animal germ. All known facts give their testimony against spontaneous generation.

Further, the phenomena of life are very peculiar and quite unexplained by the mechanics and

chemistry of matter. In every living thing, for example, there is a working as a whole, and a working from within, and a working to an end, to which we see nothing similar in the merely inorganic world. Crystals display geometrical regularity and symmetry and variety of species or type, but, as Müller says, "There is in the crystal no relation between its configuration and the activity of the whole." It has the unity which results from juxtaposition and arrangement, but in no degree the unity of reciprocal action and influence which belongs alike to the simplest and the most complex of living beings. In every plant and animal the whole is not merely composed of the parts, but acts as a whole through and by its parts, each part needing, conditioning, and influencing the whole, and the whole needing, conditioning, and influencing the parts. In the inorganic world forces are never seen acting thus, and nothing that we know of the inorganic powers of nature can reasonably lead us to suppose that they are capable of acting thus. Again, all dead bodies are wholly passive, wholly subject to the physical and chemical forces which act upon them, entirely moved from without; but all living beings, so far as observation extends, are only partially subject to these forces, displaying in addition a certain power of suspending or modifying their operations, of employing them instead of obeying them, of acting

from within as well as of being acted on from without. In this respect every living plant and animal is unlike every dead plant and animal, and every inorganic object. Now, how can this power of acting from within, — one to which there is nothing properly analogous in lifeless matter,— come from without, from lifeless matter? How can mechanical and chemical forces result in a force which resists and rules themselves, and which enables that which possesses it to act of and for itself,—in a faculty of adaptation to circumstances, of selective assimilation, growth, inherent renewal, and reproduction? Further, all that is living is, what nothing that is dead is, an end unto itself. A living being is no mere mean, but to a large extent an immanent whole—that is, one which has its reason of being, its ends of action, in itself. It is a unity of which all the elements, parts, and energies are co-ordinated by a central power to its self-preservation and self-perfection. But this implies plan and purpose, thought, foresight, and prophecy; and how are these to be accounted for by mere matter and motion?

I might appropriately, if time permitted, confirm and supplement what has just been said, by pointing out in the processes of nutrition and growth, in the healing and repairing of injured parts, and in propagation or reproduction, a number of distinctive characteristics which seem imperatively to

demand for their explanation more than merely mechanical and chemical causes. Enough has been said, however, I hope, to show that when Mr Spencer, or any other person, tells us that the argument against the materialistic hypothesis of the origin of life is one in which ignorance is made to do the part of knowledge, he gives a very unfair and inadequate view of it. The argument is based, first, on the universal and uniform experience which establishes the law *omne vivum ex vivo;* and secondly, on what observation and science inform us are the properties of inorganic powers on the one hand, and the distinctive features of life on the other. It is, consequently, based wholly on knowledge. And it is an argument of great strength, completely satisfying all the requirements of the methods both of agreement and of difference. Like all other arguments, however, as to the laws of nature, it does not demonstrate the impossibility —does not absolutely exclude the possibility— that the law may in some unknown case or cases not have held good. This bare possibility Mr Spencer and the materialists eagerly lay hold of, and actually oppose and prefer to the positive argument. Because they can fancy that the powers of inorganic nature may once have acted in a way in which they are never known to have acted, and in which they certainly never act now, they conclude that these powers did really once

act in that exceptional, not to say miraculous, manner. I should like to see it shown that *this* is not to make ignorance do the part of knowledge. In my opinion, the materialist charges upon his opponent the vice of his own reasoning.

But recent discoveries of science, we are told, go far to prove that there is no such chasm as is alleged between the dead and the living, the inorganic and organic. In support of this affirmation, however, real and relevant evidence cannot be found. It is true that until recently many chemists supposed that no organic substance could be artificially composed from inorganic constituents, and also true that a multitude of organic substances have now been so formed. The inference is that chemists may err and may have their errors corrected by experience and investigation, but certainly not that a single forward step has been taken in bridging over the gulf between life and death. Suppose every organic substance—even brain, blood, nerve, albumen, protoplasm itself—to be resolved, as I doubt not every organic substance may and will be resolved, into inorganic elements, and what follows if out of the elements involved no substance can be built up which is not dead, not one which manifests a single vital property? Simply that there is nothing even in the most elaborate organic structures, or in the corporeal parts and elements most closely associated

with vitality, which is essentially different from mere dust of the earth; that the entire body of man himself is but "dust and ashes," and that when you reach what is highest and most admirable in it, the border of the gulf between matter and the living soul is merely touched. How can any person be so illogical as to describe this as filling up or bridging over the gulf?

The assertion sometimes made that life has been proved to be merely a form of mechanical and chemical force, is without the least foundation. What has been proved is, that life does not create force, and that vital actions are carried on by means of mechanical and chemical forces. Life has been shown to do no mechanical or chemical work itself, but it has not been shown that it does not determine the direction in which mechanical and chemical forces work when they are within the living organism; and until that has been shown, nothing has been done to prove that it does not perform a function to which the ordinary physical powers are incompetent. The driver of a railway train does not add to the force generated in its engine, but he has notwithstanding a place and use. A master mason may expend no part of his strength in the actual construction of a house while he is superintending his labourers and builders, but who would consider the proof of that to be equivalent to a demonstration that

he had been of no service, or was even a purely mythical personage?

The argument from evolution to spontaneous generation is clearly not a strong one. The former may suggest a presumption in favour of the latter, but this cannot supply the place of, or warrant us to dispense with, direct and positive proof.

Is there a definite boundary-line between the plant and the animal? Is the organic world divisible into a vegetable and animal kingdom, or is there an intermediate kingdom *protista?* These two questions, it seems to me, are irrelevant in the materialistic controversy, and it is to be regretted that they should have been drawn into it, especially as biology, to which they properly belong, is not yet prepared to give them definite answers, and the danger of making ignorance do the part of knowledge in discussing them is extremely great.[1]

There is, then, a gulf between the dead and the living over which materialism throws no bridge. Science must confess that it needs a power not present in matter to account for life.

Mind, I remark next, presents to materialism a still greater difficulty. No kind of reasonable conception can be formed of a process by which molecular changes will pass into or produce sensation, pleasure or pain, perception, memory, judgment,

[1] See Appendix XVII.

desire, or will. This objection to materialism was admirably put by Professor Tyndall — in words which he has not yet retracted, and which he will find it hard to refute, should he wish to do so—when he wrote: "The passage from the physics of the brain to the corresponding facts of consciousness is unthinkable. Granted that a definite thought and a definite molecular action in the brain occur simultaneously; we do not possess the intellectual organ, nor apparently any rudiment of the organ, which would enable us to pass, by a process of reasoning, from the one phenomena to the other. They appear together, but we do not know why. Were our minds and senses so expanded, strengthened, and illuminated, as to enable us to see and feel the very molecules of the brain; were we capable of following all their motions, all their grouping, all their electrical discharges, if such there be; and were we intimately acquainted with the corresponding states of thought and feeling,—we should probably be as far as ever from the solution of the problem, How are these physical processes connected with the facts of consciousness? The chasm between the two classes of phenomena would still remain intellectually impassable." Materialism presents itself as an intelligible theory of the universe, and yet it has not succeeded in explaining a single fact in the world of consciousness. It hopes to be able some day to show us

future Shakespeares "potential in the fires of the sun," but as yet it cannot find the sensations of a *protamœba* even in its own protoplasm.[1]

There are two other objections to materialism which are as strong as any that have been urged, but which I must be content merely to indicate.

First, then, materialism is inconsistent with the testimony of our moral consciousness, with the facts of our moral nature. We perceive a distinction between right and wrong; we feel that we are free to choose between them; that we are responsible, however, for our choice; that we are praiseworthy or blameworthy, &c. These perceptions and feelings are facts as certain as any in the world, and the theory which cannot honestly accept them ought to be rejected. But materialism cannot. It must deny them, or explain them away, or invent untenable hypotheses as to their origin.

Secondly, materialism refuses satisfaction to the spiritual wants, aspirations, and convictions of men. It denies the existence of God and of the soul. It acknowledges nothing that is higher than the seen, or better than the temporal. It resolves religion in all its length and breadth into a delusion. It openly threatens to turn it out of the world. But, as we have seen, reason and morality are to be turned out also. Only when reason, morality, and religion have all been got

[1] See Appendix XVIII.

rid of, will materialism have the world to itself. And then the world will not be worth having.[1]

Let me conclude by entirely dissenting from words of Professor Huxley, which I have already quoted in this lecture. His assertion that "it is utterly impossible to prove that anything whatever may not be the effect of a material and necessary cause," is an arbitrary and unphilosophical dogma which need not, however, disquiet us, since up to the present hour no single fact of order, life, mind, morality, or religion, has been proved to be the effect of a material cause. His assertion that human logic is incompetent to show that any act is really spontaneous has no other ground than his strange misconception of what is meant by a spontaneous act,—than the fancy that "a really spontaneous act is one which, by the assumption, has no cause." His assertion that "any one who is acquainted with the history of science will admit that its progress has, in all ages, meant, and now more than ever means, the extension of the province of what we call matter and causation, and the concomitant gradual banishment from all regions of human thought of what we call spirit and spontaneity," only proves that he is more a follower of Comte than he is himself aware of, and has incautiously adopted one of that author's most superficial and erroneous generalisations. His prophecy as to the future would have been differ-

[1] See Appendix XIX.

ent if he had studied the past more thoroughly and independently, although, perhaps, the wisest course would have been not to prophesy at all. He has erred in thinking that it is *the progress* of materialism which alarms its opponents; it is *its spread*—a very different thing—which alarms them; its rapid diffusion when it is making no real progress; the humiliating fact that so many not uneducated persons are thoughtless enough to believe its proud and empty promises, although there are no achievements to justify them. He tells us that "many of the best minds of these days watch what they conceive to be the progress of materialism, in such fear and powerless anger as a savage feels when, during an eclipse, the great shadow creeps over the face of the sun." I thought that during an eclipse it was over the face of the earth that the great shadow crept; but that is of no consequence. This is, that, although where the shadow of materialism creeps there may be many to believe that there is no sun, the sun is by no means affected either by the shadow or by the foolish unbelief which accompanies it, but remains where and what it was, and when the shadow is past will be seen to be bright, beneficent, mighty, and terrible as ever. They who believe so cannot crouch and tremble before a shadow, whatever those may do who believe that the shadow is more than a shadow,—that it is greater than the sun,—that it will be eternal.

LECTURE V.

POSITIVISM.

I.

POSITIVISM is to be the subject of the present lecture. It is a doctrine which is closely related both in history and character to scepticism on the one hand, and to materialism on the other. It owes its existence to the partly concurrent and partly counteractive operation of these two theories. It is a link between them; a cross or hybrid in which their respective qualities are combined, although incapable of being truly harmonised.

The term positivism has been objected to both on philological and logical grounds, but any faults it may have are not of a seriously dangerous kind, and it is my wish to avoid all controversies merely or mainly verbal. It was not, perhaps, a term greatly needed, and it may not be the best which could have been devised; but now that it ha

been invented and so widely accepted and employed, it cannot be got rid of, and we must be content simply to guard against its being applied in ways calculated to create or foster prejudice. It was put in circulation by M. Auguste Comte, a man of remarkable intellectual power, but also of immoderate intellectual self-conceit and arrogance. He was born in 1798, and died in 1857. There is an able biography of him by the late M. Littré; and there are a multitude of sketches of his life, executed with different degrees of care and skill. His voluminous writings have been translated into our language by a few of his English disciples with self-denying zeal, and in a manner which leaves nothing to be desired.

M. Comte has no valid claim to be considered the originator of the theory to which he gave a new name and a vigorous impulse. It was taught in all its essential principles by Protagoras and others in Greece more than four hundred years before the Christian era. Positivism is the phenomenalism of the Greek sophists revived and adapted to the demands of the present age. Hume and Kant and Saint Simon were positivists before the appearance of positivism. It is scarcely possible to find in Comte's writings an original view—except on the subject of scientific method—which is generally accepted by

those who are called his disciples. He formed, indeed, a great many original notions,—notions his own by right of paternity or creation,—but these children of his brain few even of his warm admirers have felt inclined to adopt. They are the mere vagaries of an individual mind, and must be left out of account by those who are judging of the general doctrine of positivism. But although all the chief ideas of Comte had been clearly and repeatedly enunciated by earlier thinkers, he had great strength and skill in systematising doctrines and elaborately applying principles, and his influence has been both extensive and intense.

The Positivism which he taught, taken as a whole, is at once a philosophy, a polity, and a religion. It professes to systematise all scientific knowledge, to organise all industrial and social activities, and to satisfy all spiritual aspirations and affections. It undertakes to explain the past, to exhibit the good and evil, strength and weakness, of the present, and to forecast the future; to assign to every science, every large scientific generalisation, every principle and function of human nature, and every great social force, its appropriate place; to construct a system of thought inclusive of all well-established truths, and to delineate a scheme of political and religious life in which

duty and happiness, order and progress, opinion and emotion, will be reconciled and caused to work together for the good alike of the individual and of society. It sets before itself, in a word, an aim of the very largest and grandest kind conceivable; and as Comte believed that he had been signally successful in performing his mighty task, we need hardly wonder that he should have boldly claimed to have rendered to his race the services both of a St Paul and an Aristotle.

Is the system as consistent as it is undoubtedly comprehensive? Comtists themselves cannot agree as to the answer which ought to be given to this question. A few of the more enthusiastic and thoroughgoing among them—such as Dr Bridges, Mr Congreve, and, in a lesser degree, perhaps, Mr Harrison—reply in the affirmative, and accept the system as a whole. A much larger number answer in the negative, and will have nothing to do with the positivist religion. I have no wish to take part in this controversy, which is of no very great importance, and in regard to which, besides, I have elsewhere stated the conclusion at which I have arrived. As, however, the philosophy and religion of Comte are both anti-theistic, and yet, in my opinion, inconsistent with each other, I must consider them

separately,—the one in so far as it would simply push theism aside, and the other in so far as it would provide a substitute for it.

What, then, is the attitude of the positive philosophy towards religion? As represented by Comte, it may be thus described. We know, and can know, nothing except physical phenomena and their laws. The senses are the sources of all true thinking, and we can know nothing except the phenomena which they apprehend, and the relations of sequence and resemblance in which these phenomena stand to one another. Mental phenomena can all be resolved into material phenomena, and there is no such thing discoverable as either efficient or final causation, as either an origin or purpose in the world, as, consequently, either a creative or providential intelligence. The mind in its progress necessarily finds out that phenomena cannot be reasonably referred to supernatural agents, as at a later period that they cannot be referred to occult causes, but that they must be accepted as they present themselves to the senses, and arranged according to their relationships of sequence or coexistence, similarity or dissimilarity. Wherever theological speculation is found, there thought is in its infancy.

Now, the first remark which this suggests is, that it is not consistent even as a theory of positivism. It is to a considerable extent a mate-

rialistic theory, and so far as it is materialism it is not properly positivism. Materialism supposes matter to be more than a phenomenon. It supposes it to be a substance and a cause. The positivist may answer that such phenomena as feelings and thoughts are not resolved into material substances or causes, but into material phenomena. The self-contradiction, however, is not thus to be got rid of. If we know merely phenomena, we never can be warranted to say that those which we call mental can be resolved into those which we call physical. We can only be warranted in saying that the two classes of phenomena are related as coexistent or successive, similar or dissimilar. Comte went far beyond this, and therefore far beyond a self-consistent positivism—*i.e.*, phenomenalism.

Further, the limitation or reduction of phenomena to material phenomena is unwarranted. We have a direct and immediate knowledge of thinking, feeling, and willing, and simply as phenomena these are markedly distinct from the phenomena called material. They are never, as material phenomena always are, the objects of our senses. But we are at least as sure of their existence as of the existence of material phenomena, and to deny or overlook their existence is to reject or ignore that which is most indubitable. There is no testimony so strong as the direct immediate testi-

mony of consciousness. When we feel or think or will, when we perceive or remember, love or hate, we know that we do so with a certainty the most absolute. The consciousness which a man has of any state of mind at the moment when he experiences it, is not sufficient to inform him whether the state be simple or complex, original or derivative — whether it be coextensive with human consciousness or extend into the consciousness of the lower animals, or be peculiar to the consciousness of a portion of the human race or to the individual himself; nor is it sufficient to establish whether there be anything outwardly corresponding to it, but it is sufficient to establish beyond all doubt that there is such a fact in the mental experience of the individual. The most thorough scepticism cannot challenge its evidence when limited to this sphere. It is only, in fact, at this barrier that absolute scepticism is arrested. Absolute scepticism refuses to admit that in external or sense perception things appear to us as they actually—*i.e.*, in themselves —are, but not that internal or self consciousness apprehends its objects as they really exist. In external perception what apprehends is mind, and what is apprehended belongs to an altogether different world, which may or may not correspond to it; whereas in internal perception the object itself falls within the consciousness, exists only as

it is known and is known only as it exists, consciousness and existence being here coincident, and in fact identical. Internal consciousness thus carries with it stronger evidence than sense. The so-called positivism, therefore, which affirms that the objects of sense are the only phenomena apprehended, instead of keeping close to facts, as it pretends to do, contradicts the facts which the experience of every moment of conscious existence testifies to in the most direct and decisive manner. Its most obvious characteristic is the disregard of facts. A number of the adherents of positivism have, consequently, left the company of Comte at this point. They have insisted, very properly, that mental states are positive facts, and the appropriate data of science no less than physical processes.[1]

The attempt to defend Comte's position by maintaining that the phenomena of thought, feeling, and volition are not denied, but only referred to the bodily organisation, and thereby included among material phenomena, fails in two respects. In the first place, it cannot justify what it maintains. Mental states may have physical conditions and antecedents, but no mental state has ever been resolved into what is physical. In the second place, if consciousness could be fully explained by organisation, that would prove the truth of mate-

[1] See Appendix XX.

rialism, which, as I have already said, is inconsistent with positivism. When positivism says more than that the phenomena called mental are so and so related to the phenomena called material—when it says that the former can be referred to or resolved into the latter, so as to be really material phenomena,—it supposes to be true what it professes to deny—viz., the reality of causes and substances; it supposes that matter is not an aggregate of phenomena, but a substance or cause, or both.

This leads me to remark that positivism is not thorough. It goes only so far as is convenient for it, not so far as it logically ought. Comte assumes material phenomena to be the primary and ultimate known existences, — those from which science must start, and on which it must rest. But the least reflection shows us that the assumption is wholly groundless. The first thing which scepticism has swallowed up has always been the world of sense—these material phenomena. It has always found that if the senses are our sole means of knowing, the sole things known must be sensations, and sensations are states of consciousness—phenomena of mind, not of matter. If we know only phenomena, it is not material phenomena we know, but mental phenomena. What we call material phenomena are in that case mere illusions. The materialistic positivism of Comte

is bound to abdicate in favour of the idealistic positivism of Mill, which confines all our knowledge to mental phenomena.

This brings us decidedly farther on the way to the goal which, *nolens volens*, positivism must arrive at—viz., scepticism. It is not belief in God only which it must discard, but belief in matter also; and not belief merely in matter in some special philosophical sense, not belief merely in some material essence or substance distinct from phenomena, but in material phenomena themselves. If we know only phenomena, we know only mental phenomena; the whole universe is on that supposition an aggregate of states of mind, and when we think of time or space, sea or sky, as without us we are self-deluded; there is and can be no knowledge of what is without. Mr Mill, it is true, tries to preserve something, and to show that we may be philosophers and yet believe in a sort of "outer" or material world. We may believe in it, he thinks, as "a permanent possibility of sensations." But no. A possibility is not a phenomenon. If we know only what is phenomenal, we cannot know what is possible as distinct from and explanatory of the phenomenal. Nor can a mere experience of phenomena inform us that any of them will be permanent, since experience is necessarily limited to the actual, to what is and to what has been. Indeed the phrase "a permanent pos-

sibility of sensation" is unintelligible. It must have been meant either for "a permanent possibility of producing sensations" or "a permanent possibility of experiencing sensations." But matter is certainly no possibility of experiencing sensations. That matter is sentient is a groundless fancy, not a positive fact, although in the course of the ages a few thinkers and dreamers have entertained the notion. And matter cannot be a possibility of producing sensations in the view of a consistent positivism which refuses to recognise causation, efficiency. A consistent positivism must be a purely idealistic positivism. Even the dim ghost of matter which Mr Mill would retain must be discarded.

And it will not suffice. Mind must likewise go. Mind cannot be identified with its phenomena. If we know only phenomena we know only a series of states of consciousness. We can, on that supposition, have no right to say, as Mr Mill does, that a mind is "a thread of consciousness." It can only be a general term for a succession of states of consciousness unconnected by any thread. We can have no right, if positivism be true, to use language like this: "As body is the mysterious something which excites the mind to feel, so mind is the mysterious something which feels and thinks." It is not the language of positivism to point us to mysterious somethings. On the contrary, as long

as it has any regard for consistency, it will warn us to have nothing to do with "mysterious somethings," but to keep close to experienced phenomena. Positivism must give up, then, both matter and mind. What remains? Phenomena — but these reduced to states of consciousness which have neither object nor subject,—states of consciousness which seem to be, but are not, what they seem, — states of consciousness of a kind which consciousness is unconscious of, and which thought cannot conceive. It is to this bourn that positivism must inevitably come. Reason can only lead it to annihilation.

Comte lays his interdict on all speculation as to the origin of the world. He condemns both theism and atheism, both the affirmation and the denial of the existence of God. Belief and disbelief are, he thinks, in this case alike unreasonable. The mind should absolutely refuse either to believe or disbelieve on such a subject. Now this is an obviously absurd view, an obviously most erroneous advice, except on two suppositions—namely, that there is no reason whatever in favour either of theism or atheism, or that the reasons for the one exactly counterbalance those for the other. We have no right to withhold belief where there is reason for belief, nor to believe otherwise than according to reason. But all forms of theoretical atheism give some reasons for their claims to be

received, and theism maintains that it has an overwhelming weight of reason on its side. In these circumstances, no man is entitled to withhold any more than to yield belief as he pleases. No man is entitled to evade the responsibility of carefully considering what is to be believed and disbelieved on the greatest subject with which human thought can be occupied, by the arbitrary and unreasoned assertion that belief and disbelief in reference to it are both unwarranted. No man has a right to make such an assertion without trying to prove it. It is an assertion which needs proof as much as any theory of the origin of the world.

It is an assertion which does not appear, at least at the first glance, as if it would be easy of proof. For what does its proof imply? Manifestly both the disproof of all the theories which have been entertained as to the origin of things — theism, pantheism, polytheism, and even materialism — and proof that all theories which may in future be started on the same subject must be equally in vain. The latter task, as I showed in my first lecture, must transcend human power. The human mind of to-day cannot know what will be discovered by the human mind a hundred, a thousand, a million years hence. Only an infinite mind can foreknow what a finite mind will know throughout eternity. It is absurd for a philosophy

which professes to confine itself to experience to dogmatise on what man may or may not possibly know. He who would prove that God cannot be known, must prove that there is something essentially self-contradictory in the very notion of the Divine existence and nature. But that cannot be proved by experience; it can only be proved, if it can be proved at all, by the self-criticism of reason, by the metaphysical process which positivism pronounces worthless.

A simple refutation of the proofs adduced on behalf of the various forms of religion must be admitted to be a more hopeful undertaking, but even it is not one in which positivism has succeeded. It has brought nothing new to light against pantheism. It has favoured materialism instead of overcoming and expelling it. Its arguments against theism have consisted to a large extent of ancient and superficial fallacies, the weight of which are as nothing compared with the reasons in the opposite scale. Before casting aside a belief like that in God—a belief entertained by a long succession of generations, by millions of men, by the noblest intellects which the world has ever known—a belief the most fruitful in great thoughts and great deeds—a belief which could not be displaced without shaking society from top to base,—the examination of its foundations ought to be impartial and profound; but

positivism has undertaken no examination of the kind.

The only argument with any claim to be regarded as original or distinctive which positivism has employed against theism, is that which some of its supporters rest on the so-called *law of the three states.* Comte, as every one knows who knows anything regarding his views, holds that speculation is first theological, then metaphysical, and finally positive; or, in other words, is first a reference of phenomena to supernatural volitions, then to occult causes, and finally the mere arranging of them according to their relations of sequence and coexistence, likeness or unlikeness. He believed that he had established that the progressive march of human thought was from the first to the last of these states, and that when the last was reached, those which preceded it were left behind; that when positive science was attained, theological and metaphysical speculation were necessarily seen to be illegitimate and worthless. Some, however, who have imagined that they adopted his law—the late Mr J. S. Mill and Mr J. Morley, for example—would ignore its negative bearing, at least towards theology, and suppose it to mean merely that in the positive epoch all phenomena, physical and social, will be looked upon as following a fixed order, although that order may have been ordained by God. With positivists of this class I need here

have no controversy. I am only surprised that they should be able to suppose that they accept Comte's law as proposed by himself. If he had seen that positivist thought was not exclusive of theological thought; that when you had reached a law of phenomenon, so far from having done with all questions as to whether or not these phenomena have any relation to God, you were only brought into a position to ask, Is this law not an ordinance of God?—is it not an expression of His will?—I should have had nothing to object to him. But had he seen that, he would have seen also that his positivism was a comparatively small and partial thing, however true it might be within the narrow limits in that case assigned to it. Certainly, as a matter of fact, he did not see it. He clearly and explicitly taught the contrary. He distinctly held that positivism so excludes metaphysics and theology, that positivism completed would be metaphysics and theology eliminated from the entire intelligible world.

For this dogma, however, he produced no historical evidence. There was, in fact, none to produce. The scientific proof of law has in no single instance been found to include or involve disproof of a lawgiver. In no nation, and with respect to no single science or even single scientific truth, has the human mind yet reached a position which is beyond or above theism, or from which theism

can be seen to be untrue; so that Comte's law, as propounded by himself, is in its negative reference, in which alone it concerns us here, wholly unwarranted by facts. Comte has mistaken, as I have previously had occasion to prove, in a work on the 'Philosophy of History in France and Germany,' three coexistent states for three successive stages of thought, three aspects of things for three epochs of time. Theology, metaphysics, and positive science, instead of following only after one another, each constituting an epoch, have each pervaded all epochs—have coexisted from the earliest times to the present day. There has been no passing away of any one of them. Each new positive science brings with it principles which the metaphysician finds it requisite to submit to an analytic examination, and in which he finds new materials for speculation; and also, in the measure of its success, results in which the theologian finds some fresh disclosure of the thoughts and character of God. Underneath all positive or empirical science there is metaphysics; above all such science there is theology; and these three are so related that every advance of science must extend the spheres both of true metaphysics and true theology. Hence history, far from showing that theology and metaphysics are purely of her domain, merely passing phases of thought preparatory for positive science. illusions of the

infancy and youth of humanity through which the mind must pass on its way to maturity, certifies, on the contrary, that all three have constantly existed together,—that while each has been gradually emancipating itself from the interference and control of the others, each has been advancing and evolving within its proper sphere and in due relationship to the others; that they are distinguishable but not divisible; that they represent real aspects of existence and respond to eternal aspirations of the human heart. I do not dwell, however, on this, because I have elsewhere done so. Suffice it to say that the appeal of the positivist to history for a testimony unfavourable to theism, evokes only a declaration on its behalf.[1]

Let us consider for a moment the positivist appeal to reason. Under this head Comte's fundamental objection to theism and theology is, that they imply that man can attain to a knowledge of causes, whereas causes are, he holds, absolutely inaccessible to the human intellect. He admits that a religious theory of the world, a belief in a divine Author of the world, is inevitable, if reason can rise to causes, but he denies that it can. To deny, however, is always easy; to prove a negative is always difficult. In order to prove the negative in question, M. Comte must have proved that he

[1] See Appendix XXI.

himself was not a cause; that it could not be fairly concluded that he was the efficient and intelligent author of the books which he took credit to himself for having written; that the apparent evidences of mind in these works were deceptive, and did not warrant the reference of them to mind as their cause. The only reasons which he advanced against the theistic conclusion should have led him straight to suspense of judgment respecting the causation involved in the production of his own works. They were as good grounds for declaring illusory the evidence for his own existence as for disregarding the evidence for God's existence, although, of course, extremely insufficient grounds for doing either the one or the other. If from the combination of letters in a book we can legitimately rise to the mind of the author as at least one of the causes of its existence, a knowledge of causes, in the only sense in which a theist is interested in maintaining that they can be known, is clearly not inaccessible to the human intellect, but within its easy reach. If, on the other hand, positivists are justified in asserting that causes are absolutely unknowable, let them not expect us to believe that they themselves are the authors of books and speeches; that their invisible thoughts and volitions have originated printed and audible words. If a human mind can reveal itself as in a certain sense a cause through paper and printer's

ink, it is utterly arbitrary to deny that the Divine mind may reveal itself as in the same sense a cause through the arrangements and forms of the material universe.

All the reasonings of positivists against causes resolve themselves at last into the single argument —We cannot *see* causality, and therefore we cannot *know* causes; our senses show us succession but not causation, antecedents and consequents but not causes and effects; and we know nothing, and have no right to believe anything, beyond what our senses show us. In other words, their entire argumentation proceeds on a superficial hypothesis as to the nature of knowledge—one which fails to note that the mind itself is the most important factor in knowledge, and that the simplest and directest experience presupposes a constitution in thought as well as in things. Causes are inferred to be metaphysical fictions because sensation is assumed to be the sole means of knowledge, the only true ground of belief, and the complete measure of existence. But these assumptions are crude and unfounded dogmas. To those who believe that there is no such state as mere sensation—that thought and belief must always go beyond sensation—that the idea of cause is a necessary condition of intellectual activity—and that phenomena can only be apprehended and conceived of by the help of this idea,—the reasoning of the

positivist must seem a manifest begging of the question.

When treating last year of the design argument, I examined all the objections of Comte against final causes which seemed to me possessed of any plausibility. On this point, therefore, I shall merely remark now, that if, as he maintained, we can know nothing of final causes, nothing of the purposes which things are meant to accomplish, the arguments by which he attempted to show that they might have realised their final causes, fulfilled their purposes, better than they do, ought in self-consistency never to have been used. If we can have no notion of the purpose of a thing, we cannot judge whether it is fulfilling its purpose or not, whether it is fulfilling it well or ill. Comte's unqualified denial of the possibility of knowing the ends of things is glaringly inconsistent with his attempts to prove that things might have been constituted and arranged in a happier and more advantageous manner. For a man who avows complete ignorance of the purposes of things to try to show that they are not fulfilling their purposes, or might fulfil them more successfully, is the most suicidal, self-contradictory undertaking imaginable. It shows that he himself finds it impossible really to believe what he rashly affirms. It shows that in spite of his theory the belief in final causes is so rooted in his intellectual

nature that he assumes it even when reasoning against it.

II.

Were positivism established as a philosophy, no room would be left for religion in the ordinary sense of the term. If the mind can know nothing except the phenomena of immediate experience, if sensations and feelings be the matter of all its thoughts, if God be wholly beyond its cognisance, it is inevitably condemned to confine its beliefs, anticipations, fears, and joys, to this visible and temporal scene of things. This being the case, how can there be any religion ? Till comparatively late in his career, Comte did not suppose there could be any, and did not feel the want of any. He considered "religiosity," as he called it, "a mere weakness, and avowal of want of power." But in the latter part of his life he passed through certain experiences which convinced him that the heart was as essential a part of humanity as the head ; that the spirit required to be satisfied as well as the intellect. He felt in himself wants which mere science could not supply, and recognised, in consequence, that the human race could not dispense with a religion. With characteristic boldness he proceeded to invent what he was pleased to designate a religion. This so-called

religion has not as yet obtained many adherents, and does not appear as if it would be more successful in the future, although its founder felt no doubt that it would speedily supersede all former faiths. Few of those who are positivists in philosophy are also positivists in religion. As a rule, positivists have no religion. And in this, I think, they are quite consistent.

M. Comte laid the basis of his proposed religious reformation in a radical alteration of the signification of the word religion. Religion had been previously always understood to imply belief in a God—to rest on some affirmation of the supernatural. M. Comte wished to present as a religion a theory of life which involved no belief in a God—no affirmation of the supernatural. He gained his end simply enough by employing the word religion in a peculiar sense. But, of course, there was and could be no justification of this procedure. The human race has rights in such a term as religion which are not to be sacrificed to the will of any individual. The business of a thinker dealing with this and similar words is, to ascertain what they have hitherto meant and what they actually mean, and to apply them as other men have done and do; for him to impose a signification of his own upon them is alike an arbitrary and an arrogant act, and one which tends to generate confusion and error. A religion which is

independent of a belief in a God is a conception of the same kind as a circle whose radii are not all equal. Belief in a God is of the very essence of all that men have been accustomed to call religion, and whatever is not inclusive of this belief ought to be expressed by some other term than religion.

What, however, is religion, according to M. Comte? It is, he says, "the synthetic idealisation of our existence," or "that state of perfect unity which is the distinctive mark of man's existence, both as an individual and in society, when all the constituent parts of his nature, moral as well as physical, are made habitually to converge towards one common unity." Mr J. S. Mill accepted M. Comte's view on this subject, and gave it expression in clear and simple terms. These are the conditions necessary to constitute a religion in the positivist sense of the word, as stated by Mr Mill: "There must be a creed or conviction claiming authority over the whole of human life; a belief, or set of beliefs, deliberately adopted, respecting human destiny and duty, to which the believer inwardly acknowledges that all his actions ought to be subordinate. Moreover, there must be a sentiment connected with this creed, or capable of being involved by it, sufficiently powerful to give it, in fact, the authority over human conduct to which it lays claim in theory." According to this doctrine, "if a person has an ideal object, his attach-

ment and sense of duty towards which are able to control and discipline all his other sentiments and propensities, and prescribe to him a rule of life, that person has a religion."

Such is the account of religion given by M. Comte and Mr Mill. What are we to think of it? Well, it could scarcely be more inaccurate than it is. Were we not told that it was meant for an account of religion, we should certainly never have imagined anything of the kind, and, even after being told this, it is somewhat difficult to believe it. The distinguished authors of the description have succeeded about as well as would a painter who, designing to represent a man, should draw the likeness of a horse or some other animal. They have given a sort of picture not of religion at all, but of morality, and have consequently done what they could inextricably to confound religion and morality. Conscience, as the supreme legislative principle in man, is necessarily the power which is in possession of the synthetic ideal of life. Its dictates constitute the law of unity to which all the parts and faculties of human nature should habitually converge. It essentially consists of "a creed or conviction claiming authority over the whole of human life, and a sentiment connected with this creed, or capable of being invoked by it, giving it the authority over human conduct to which it lays claim in theory." When language

is used with propriety, "if a person has an ideal object, his attachment and sense of duty towards which are able to control and discipline all his other sentiments and propensities, and prescribe to him a rule of life," what that person will be said to have is a good moral character. Thus the Comtist account of religion corresponds in some measure to morality. But it has scarcely the most distant resemblance to religion. Test it by application to any of the heathen religions, with the exception of Buddhism, and its inaccuracy will be seen at once; while Buddhism only answers to it so far in consequence of being a system of philosophy and a code of ethics as well as a religion. Religion is not essentially synthetic. It does not necessarily tend to unity, and still less is it necessarily a state of perfect unity. In almost all its lower forms, and even in the worships of India and Greece, in may be seen to work towards division and multiplicity. The tendency to unity is only manifested in a religion when the theorising reason obtains the mastery over imagination and phantasy. The mythological processes are the reverse of synthetic or unifying. Nor does religion necessarily and of itself prescribe a universal and comprehensive rule of life. One of the most obtrusive facts presented by the history of religion is, that only in its higher types does religion enter into alliance with morality, and add its

sanction and consecration to a general code of conduct. Religion as religion, may be, and in countless cases is, grievously divorced from the sense of duty. The separation is, of course, to be deplored, but its possibility, and, still more, its frequent actual occurrence, prove that to identify religion with morality is altogether inadmissible. Further, religion does not imply idealisation in the sense meant by Comte and Mill. Imagination, there is no doubt, enters largely into religion, and worshippers always conceive of their gods as in some respects superior to themselves. But idealisation as a conscious formation of types of perfection, or a deliberate imaginative glorification of anything, so as to make it an ideal object in contradistinction to a real object, is not a religious but a purely poetical process. Ideals cannot even be idols.

Yet Comte might have gone still farther from the truth as to the nature of religion than he actually did. The idealisation which he demanded was the idealisation of a reality,—the idealisation of the Great Being or Humanity. It was not the idealisation which is pure fiction—which is wholly irrespective of truth — which has no connection whatever with reality. Comte thus left it possible for a successor to acquire the fame of originality by maintaining that the essence of religion was such pure or absolutely baseless idealisation; and

this, I regret to say, is precisely what has been done by Lange, the author of the 'History of Materialism.' He has followed to the very end the path opened by Comte; and although the end be an abyss, he has cast himself into it. He does not propose, like Strauss, to substitute poetry for religion, but he regards religion as merely a kind of poetry. Man, he holds, has, and can have, no knowledge of anything transcending positive experience, no cognisance of supernatural reality, no apprehension of spiritual truth. At the same time, he also holds that knowledge, experience, and truth, are insufficient to satisfy the wants of human nature. He insists that there are tendencies or instincts in the heart which crave for ideal objects that respond exclusively to the emotions. The spirit, in his view, can only find peace by creating a home for itself in the ideal world. But it must beware of falling into the delusion that the contents of that world are truths. It must regard them merely as means of emotional development and culture. Hymns like "Rock of Ages cleft for me," and "Jesus, lover of my soul," may be retained and devotionally used, provided it be remembered that they are simply poetry—that they have no basis in reality.

The mere statement of such a view is a sufficient refutation of it. What it represents as religion is an idiotic and immoral mimicry of religion. Lange

has given no reasons for entertaining it, and I need give none for rejecting it. I have noticed it merely to show that as to the nature of religion there is even a lower depth than that into which Comte fell. He failed to see that only a religion which is based on the conviction that there is a reality higher than man's highest ideals, can satisfy the intellect and heart; and he fancied, in consequence, that a finite being—a being which can be exalted and magnified by idealisation—was an appropriate object of adoration. But great as was this error, it was, of course, far less monstrous than to teach that religion was wholly independent of belief in truth or reality, and that men ought only to worship in the future what they know to be the fictions of their own minds.

The positivist religion presents to us as an object of worship a trinity of existences—the earth, space, and humanity. The earth is called the Supreme Fetich, space the Supreme Medium and humanity the Supreme Being. The positivist is instructed duly to commemorate the services of our common mother, the earth, and of her coeval institution, space; but humanity is to be the chief object of his worship. True piety consists in having the thoughts, affections, and volitions ever bent on the preservation and amelioration of humanity. This humanity is by no means, however, what is ordinarily called humanity. It is something very

peculiar indeed. It is neither human nature, nor the human race, nor the aggregate of living men. It is said to be an organism of which individuals and generations, whether belonging to the past, present, or future, are inseparable parts, and yet it excludes multitudes of the human species, and includes some of the lower animals. It does not comprehend savage and unprogressive peoples, or individuals without any particular merits. It consists for the most part of the dead and the unborn. The majority of the living are only its servants, without the power at present of becoming its organs. It is only seven years after they are dead, and on condition of their being found worthy of "subjective immortality," that they are to be "incorporated in the Supreme Being." The incorporation is to be effected by the vote of the positivist community. As the positivist believes in the annihilation of all the dead, and as the future generations are not yet in existence, his Supreme Being is obviously a being which is largely no being at all, an entity which is for the most part a non-entity. The notion of it is, in fact, so self-contradictory, that it can only be expressed in language which seems intended to caricature it.

That this should be the case is all the more remarkable, because Comte was fully aware how incumbent upon him it was accurately to deter-

mine what was to be meant by humanity. He knew and acknowledged that a clear and consistent conception of the signification of the term was to his theory of religion as indispensable as is a solid and well-laid foundation-stone to a building; that to attain and exhibit such a conception was his first duty in connection with the new faith which he desired to propagate; and that if he failed in this part of his self-imposed task, his failure as a rival of St Paul must be fatal and total. Impressed with these convictions, he could not, as a conscientious thinker, do otherwise than bestow much labour in attempting to ascertain and explain the nature of the humanity which he represented as an object of worship. His failure certainly cannot be attributed to his having shrunk from the requisite exertion. He toiled long and hard on the subject. Still fail he did, and most signally. The notion of humanity as he has presented it in the 'Positive Polity,' although the very corner-stone of his religion, is so self-contradictory and incoherent, that it can only be expressed in Hibernicisms. It is composed of concrete and abstract, positive and metaphysical elements, of facts and fictions, of entity and non-entity. An obvious inference is, that Comte cannot have founded the religion of humanity.

While the object of the positivist faith is extremely ill defined, its organisation and worship

are most minutely delineated. This is the consequence, however, not of internal self-consistency and reasonableness, but of imitation of Roman Catholicism. While Comte abandoned the great and comprehensive principles which the Roman Catholic Church holds in common with the rest of the Christian world, he retained many of the distinctive prejudices which it sanctions and engenders, and copied its policy and ritual in describing the constitution and prescribing the worship of what he believed would be the religion of the future. He demanded that there should be set apart to the service of humanity an order of priests or *savants*, composed of positivist philosophers, hierarchically arranged, with a supreme pontiff at their head, to whom absolute powers are to be intrusted in intellectual or spiritual matters. This priesthood is to be salaried by the State; is to have the entire charge of public education and of the practice of medicine; and is to counsel, and, if need be, reprove the temporal power. The high priest must reside in Paris, the holy city of the new religion. There are to be ecclesiastical courts and laws. The temples should all face towards Paris, and are to be furnished with altars, images, &c. The dress of the clergy is to be rather more feminine than masculine. Eighty-one solemn festivals, secondary or principal, are to constitute the worship annually paid

to the Great Being by its servants assembled in its temples. Each step in life is to have its special consecration, and hence the sacraments of the new religion are to be nine in number,—presentation, initiation, admission, destination, marriage, maturity, retreat, transformation, and incorporation. Private prayers are to be presented thrice a-day; the morning prayer is to be an hour, the mid-day prayer a quarter of an hour, and the evening prayer half an hour in length. What is called "the beautiful creation of the medieval mind—the woman with the child in her arms," is selected as the symbol of humanity; and "to give life and vividness to this symbol, and to worship in general, each positivist is taught to adopt as objects of his adoration his mother, his wife, his daughter, allowing the principal part to the mother, but blending the three into one compound influence—representing to him humanity in its past, its present, and its future.

I must not more minutely describe the monstrous mixture of atheism, fetichism, ultramontanism, and ritualism, which claims to be the Religion of Humanity, so absurd and grotesque is it. Almost its only noble characteristic is the spirit of disinterestedness which it breathes, the stress which it lays on the duty of living for the good of others. In this respect it has imitated, although *longo*

intervallo, the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But unlike the Gospel, although it enjoins love to one another with the urgency which is due, it unseals no fresh source and brings to light no new motives of love. A mere doctrinal inculcation of the duty of active and affectionate beneficence, under the barbarous name of altruism, is its highest service as a system of religion, what it has added thereto being worse than useless, because tending to render even "the royal law" of love itself ridiculous.[1]

Is it not instructive that Comte should have been unable to devise anything better than the so-called religion of which I have been speaking, and that neither he nor any other person who has attempted to raise a substitute for Christianity on the basis of science has failed signally to display his own feebleness and folly? The character of the religions which have been invented in the present age is no slight indirect confirmation of the divine origin of the religion which they would displace. If all that men can do in the way of religious invention, even in the nineteenth century, and with every help which science can give them, is like what we have seen them doing, the religion which has come down to us through so many centuries can have been no human invention. It could not have been originated by science; and were it

[1] See Appendix XXII.

withdrawn, science would assuredly find no substitute for it. Take it away and we should be left even at this hour in absolute spiritual darkness and helplessness. That is the truth which all modern attempts to found and form new religions concur in establishing.

LECTURE VI.

SECULARISM.

I.

THE subject of my last lecture was Positivism. Now I wish to speak of Secularism. These two theories are nearly related in nature. They are manifestations of the same principles and tendencies. They may almost be said to be the two halves of the same whole; in other words, secularism may be regarded as the theory of life or conduct which flows from the theory of belief or knowledge that constitutes the substance of positivism. And yet it would be an error to represent secularism as historically an offshoot of positivism. It may fairly claim, I believe, to be as much of English growth as positivism must be admitted to be of French growth. Its representatives have been, it is true, considerably influenced by the writings of the founder of positivism, and still more influenced by the writings of his English followers,

particularly by those of Mr J. S. Mill and G. H. Lewes; but in the main their scepticism is a native product. Thomas Paine and Richard Carlile, Jeremy Bentham and James Mill, Robert Owen and George Combe,—all contributed at least as much to the formation of secularism as Auguste Comte.

It is difficult, or rather impossible, to ascertain to what extent secularism is prevalent. There are, so far as I know, no reliable statistics on the subject. Many are doubtless complete secularists who do not call themselves so, and who belong to no secularist society. On the other hand, some who call themselves secularists, and perhaps even the majority of the members of some of the secularist societies, hold probably only a very small part of what is usually implied by the term secularism. Mr Holyoake represents what may be called one school of secularists, and Mr Bradlaugh another; and one main difference between them is, that the former denies that the principles of secularism include atheism, while the latter affirms that they do. Yet even Mr Bradlaugh does not hold that atheism is a necessary condition of membership in secularist associations. Such membership may, consequently, be in some, or even in many cases, merely the expression of more or less dissatisfaction with the theology taught in our churches, and of sympathy with

certain projected social and political changes. It may not exclude either belief in a God or belief in a future state. Hence even those who ought to know best the strength of secularism are found to differ widely from one another as to what its strength is, and as to whether its strength be increasing or not. In proof, I may quote from the discussion between Messrs Bradlaugh and Holyoake held in the New Hall of Science, London, in 1870. The former thus replies to the latter's statement that the Freethought party is in a state of disorganisation: "I presume my friend means relatively to some other period of their existence. It is so disorganised, that I think we can send something like a hundred petitions to the House of Commons in favour of any measure we desire to support. It is so disorganised, that within three days I will undertake to have all the principal towns of England and Scotland placarded with any particular placard which it is desired to have brought before the notice of the people. It is so disorganised, that there is not a large town, not a village in England, not a large town in the south of Scotland, and not many in the north, not many in the south-west of Ireland, that within four or five days I could not have any kind of communication placed by the hands of the members of the Secular Society in the hands of the clergymen of those towns. I am not speaking of what could be

done. I am speaking of what has been done during the last few years. Our organisation has been such that we have played a part in the political action of the country which has made itself felt" (p. 56). Mr Holyoake answers: "Mr Bradlaugh wanders through this land proclaiming the principles of secularism as though they were atheism, and arguing with the clergy. Why, when I go now to Glasgow, to Huddersfield, to Liverpool, to Manchester, I find the secularists there unadvanced in position. Even in Northampton, which Mr Bradlaugh knows, I found them lately meeting on the second floor of a public-house, where I found them twenty or twenty-five years ago. In Glasgow they are in the same second-rate position they were in twenty-five or thirty years ago. What have we been doing? Does not this show an obsolete policy? Ranters, Muggletonians, Mormons, and men of their stamp, are superior to acting so. Any party in the present state of opinion in the world could with thought have done more. The most ordinary sects build or hire temples, and other places, where their people decently meet. Mr Bradlaugh, with all his zeal and appeals, finds to-day that all London can do is to put up this kind of place in which we now meet opposite a lunatic asylum, where people, so the enemy says, naturally expect to find us. He is even obliged to tell you that at the West-end of

London he does not think highly of their state. Now, we who have principles of materialism, and descant incessantly on their superiority and efficacy, what halls of splendour and completeness we ought to put up! . . . All that Mr Bradlaugh said about the organisation of the party was not an answer to what I said. I spoke of the organisation of ideas in it. I spoke of the number of your paying members that belong to your societies in any part of the country. Look at the poverty of their public resources. Look at the few people of local repute that will consent to share their name and association. Why do they not do it? Because they find no definite principle set down which does not involve them in atheism and infidelity. The truth is, that there are liberal theists, liberal believers in another life, liberal believers in God, perfectly willing to unite together with the extremest thinkers, for secular purposes, giving effect to every form of human liberty—but they refuse to be saddled with the opprobrium of opinions they do not hold, or do dislike."

These two estimates of the strength and progress of secularism by its two best-known representatives are very different, and yet probably they are not really contradictory. I am inclined to believe that they are both fair and unexaggerated statements, and that if we combine them, instead of contrasting them, we shall come tolerably near to

the truth. If secularism be dissociated from atheism it may be as strong as Mr Bradlaugh represents it to be, while if explicitly committed to atheism it may be as weak as Mr Holyoake represents it to be. Some of the advocates of atheistic secularism speak as if they represented the great body of the artisans of our large towns. This would be most alarming if it were true; but no real evidence has been produced to show that it is true, and I for one entirely disbelieve it. I should be surprised if in Edinburgh, for example, there were not on the communion rolls of many a single congregation the names of more artisans—and skilled artisans too—than there are of avowedly atheistical secularists in the whole city; and yet, I daresay, what secularists there are could get a large number of signatures to petitions in favour of purely secular education, the disestablishment and disendowment of the National Church, the abolition of the House of Lords, and a great many other things, wise and foolish. On the other hand, it may not improbably be the case that the strength of the most thorough secularism is by no means fully represented by the number of its avowed adherents; that many are decidedly in sympathy with it who do not decidedly attach themselves to it; and that many are on the way which would lead to acceptance of the atheism which it teaches who have not yet reached that goal. I believe that atheism

is more diffused at present among the literary classes of this country than among the labouring classes; but no doubt it is far too prevalent among the latter also—so prevalent that piety and patriotism both demand that every wise effort be made energetically to counteract it.

Secularism is the most prevalent form of unbelief amongst the manual workers of this country; it is almost confined to them; and the chief causes of its spread, and of the character which it bears, must be sought for in their history. It has always been closely associated with political dissatisfaction, and no candid and well-informed person will deny that the political dissatisfaction has been to a considerable extent reasonable and just. The French Revolution caused even in this country not merely a temporary reaction from the kind of unbelief which prevailed before it, but a sort of general anti-revolutionary terror, largely characterised by blindness, bigotry, and violence. The terror gradually died away; and the blindness, bigotry, and violence discredited even what was true in the principles with which they had been associated. The long war with France and a selfish and unjust commercial legislation spread wide and terrible suffering among the poor; and the blind opposition of the governing classes to political progress, and of the clergy to religious freedom, naturally produced a dangerous irritation which gave rise at once to

demands for the most radical political changes, and to the most sweeping rejection of the hitherto accepted religious beliefs.

Mr. Owen, whose socialistic views found for a time a multitude of believers sufficiently sincere to endeavour to realise them in practice, severely denounced all the religions of the world, but he never ceased to be a theist, and latterly became a spiritualist. Jeremy Bentham and several of the group of thinkers who gathered around him were atheists; but, although far from timid men, they had not courage enough to avow publicly their real sentiments on the subject of religion, lest by doing so they should lessen their influence as political and juridical reformers. It was only from the ranks of the working classes that there came forth men with the full courage of their convictions—men who not merely dared openly to avow atheism, as well as republicanism and socialism, but to defend their atheism before the courts of law, and to endure for it imprisonment and other penalties. Such men were Charles Southwell, Thomas Cooper, George Jacob Holyoake, Thomas Paterson, &c.; and these men are to be regarded as the founders and first propagators of Secularism. It would be unjust to refuse them the honour due to their courage and honesty; and there can be no doubt that by their brave and self-sacrificing conduct they merited well of their fellow-countrymen, no

matter how erroneous may have been the convictions for which they suffered. Those who prosecuted them supposed, of course, that they were defending Christianity, but Christianity can be defended in no such way. It forbids all prosecution—all persecution—for the sake of religion. Force cannot possibly propagate the truth, or produce the faith, or promote the love in which the Gospel consists. The Gospel is intolerant, indeed, with the intolerance which is inherent in the very nature of truth. Truth can only be neglected by a man at his peril. No man is morally free to believe a lie of any kind. All truth carries with it the right to be believed, and moral truth carries with it, in addition, the right to be obeyed. The Gospel as truth, moral and spiritual truth, the highest truth, yea, the truth, does demand of us accordingly that we both believe and obey it—that we submit ourselves to it in mind, heart, and life. It holds us guilty if we do not. It warns us that either unbelief or disobedience is a most grievous sin, and will have most grievous consequences. But this intolerance, if it be intolerance, has nothing to do with coercion. Truth cannot be furthered by force. It must rest its claims to allegiance solely on evidence submitted to the scrutiny of reason and conscience; and if its evidence be rejected, however perversely, there is no help for that in compulsion,

which can only add to what sin already exists the sin of hypocrisy. Persecution can never arise from zeal for the Gospel as truth—from zeal for the Gospel properly understood. If ever due to zeal in any measure, and not to pride, selfishness, anger, ambition, and other hateful lusts which war against the soul, and set men at strife and war with one another, it must be to a zeal which is in alliance with error. Zeal for the Gospel and erroneous views of its nature may lead to persecution, but never zeal and true views of its nature. If the kingdom of God be thought of as a kingdom of truth,—if to receive, love, and obey the truth as it is in Jesus be felt to be the only means of belonging to it,—the utmost intensity of zeal cannot incline or tempt us to the use of force, since force can have no tendency to promote the interests of such a kingdom. The men, therefore, who by their courage and endurance were specially instrumental in convincing their countrymen that persecution for the avowal and advocacy even of atheism is a folly and a crime, have really rendered a service to the cause of Christian truth, and their names will not be recorded without honour when the history of our century is impartially written.

The person to whom Secularism owes its name, and who has done most to make it what it is in England, is George Jacob Holyoake, and it is chiefly as presented by him that I shall consider it

for a little. In doing so, we must determine first how secularism is related to religion. As I have already indicated, there is on this point a fundamental difference of opinion among secularists. Mr Holyoake and those who agree with him hold that secularism ought to start with the study of nature as manifested to us, and ignore religion. Mr Bradlaugh and those who agree with him hold that secularism can only be founded in the disproof and rejection of religion. Mr Holyoake is an atheist in the same sense and to the same extent as Mr Bradlaugh. He objects, however, to the name, while Mr Bradlaugh does not. The ground of his objection is that atheist is understood to mean "one who is not only without God, but without morality." But surely it can only be in very bad dictionaries and by very uncandid persons that the word atheist is so defined and employed. It properly means merely a man who thinks that there is reason for disbelieving that there is a God, or a man who thinks that there is no reason for believing that there is a God. It is in the latter sense that both Mr Holyoake and Mr Bradlaugh are atheists, and the former is so as much as the latter, and he fully acknowledges this, although he would prefer to be called a cosmist to being called an atheist. It is not because he does not accept and advocate atheism in the only sense in which it is accepted and advocated by Mr Bradlaugh that he

entirely differs from him on the question as to whether atheism is or is not involved in secularism.

What, then, are his reasons for maintaining that secularism ought to be severed from atheism? The first is that the severance is rationally necessary. Secularism is, in his view, a theory of life and its duties founded exclusively on a study of the laws of nature. Theism, pantheism, and atheism, are all hypotheses as to the origin of these laws. But if we know what the laws are we may order our life according to them, although ignorant of their origin, or whatever hypothesis we may adopt as to their origin. Our present existence is a fact; and men may agree, and ought to agree, to deal with it as such, although they cannot agree as to whether there is a future life or not. "To ignore is not to deny. To go one way is not to deny that there may be, to other persons, another way. To travel by land is not to deny the water. The chemist ignores architecture, but he does not deny it. And so the secularist concerns himself with this world without denying or discussing any other world, either the origin of this, or the existence of that."

Now I think this reasoning will not stand even a slight examination. One science is, it is true, distinct from another, and yet to cultivate one is not to deny another. So theology, as a mere department of thought, is distinct from the physical

and mental sciences, and he who studies the latter may not direct his attention to the former. But observe, first, that although the sciences are so far distinct that to cultivate one is not to deny another, they are also so related that he who cultivates one cannot afford to ignore others. The student of astronomy will not succeed if he ignores mathematics. If you entertain false views of mechanical and chemical laws you will never correctly explain geological phenomena. And in like manner, if there be a theology which directly or indirectly denies any law of nature, the science which establishes that there is such a law must do more than merely ignore the theology which disowns it—it must oppose that theology. It cannot otherwise maintain its own truth and self-consistency. Then observe, secondly, that secularism is not mere knowledge, but an art, or at least the theory of an art, professedly based on knowledge, and that consequently it cannot reasonably ignore any kind of knowledge which may concern it as an art. Architecture is an art—the art of building houses—and as such it cannot afford to ignore any kind of knowledge that bears on the building of houses. An architecture which took no account of the law of gravitation and other principles of mechanics, of the properties of stone, lime, and wood, of wind and water, light and air, would be only the art of trying to build houses that would not stand, or

which could not be inhabited if they did. Apply this to the case before us. Secularism professes to teach us a more difficult and complex art than that of building houses—the art of ordering our lives aright in this world—the art of properly discharging our duties in this present life; and at the same time secularism, as represented by Mr Holyoake, tells us that we may ignore the questions, Is there a God? is there a future world? I ask if such secularism be not precisely like an architecture which would advise us to take no account in building our houses of light and air, and therefore not to trouble ourselves about windows and ventilators? Give me reason to believe that there is no God and no future existence, and then I shall have reason to ignore them; but to ask me to ignore them before you have done so, is neither more nor less than to ask me to act like a fool. If I cannot find out that there is a God or a future life, I must be convinced by reason that I cannot. If I can find out anything about them, I ought to do my best to find out as much about them as I can. And whatever I find out, or think I find out about them, I am bound as a reasonable and moral being to take account of in my conduct in this life.

But Mr Holyoake has another reason. He wishes secularism to be a positive, peaceful, fruitful system. He dislikes a merely negative form

of freethought. He comes into the provinces and finds secularist societies ruled by young orators who are mere negationists, who have no capital in principles, whose whole stock-in-trade is denial of what somebody else holds, and he says that that is not secularism in any possible sense, and does harm rather than good by angering people instead of instructing them. To remedy this he would have secularists to intrench themselves in the inculcation of purely secular principles, and to apply their energies directly and mainly to the development and realisation of these principles, with little or no regard either to atheism or theism.

The motive originating and underlying this argument is most honourable to Mr Holyoake, and is in accordance with his character. But I cannot see the justice of it in itself. It does not seem relevant against even a secularist like Mr Bradlaugh, because, of course, he is able to reply that he teaches atheism because he thinks theism very pernicious, so that to destroy it is to do a vast amount of good; and that he also teaches what is positive in secularism, when he has shown that he has a right to be a secularist at all. Nor can the argument recommend itself to the theist. To him Mr Holyoake's secular principles, in so far as they do not involve atheism, will seem to belong to himself as much as to Mr Holyoake. What truth of science, he will say, is there which I do not

accept as much as you? What law of secular duty do you acknowledge which I reject? As a theist I am bound by even more obligations than you are to honour all science and all duty. It is only by your atheism, therefore, and by the negations implied in your atheism, that you can distinguish yourself from me. All the purely positive truth in your secularism, all the science, all the duty, is not more yours than it is mine, although I reject utterly your secularism, and maintain that man has no duties more important than those which he owes to his God, and that it is sheer folly for an immortal being to live as if death were the end of all.

It must be added that Mr Holyoake acknowledges that he was not uninfluenced in the formation and adoption of his opinion by considerations of expediency. In the debate already referred to he said: "The principles of secularism, which I maintain are definable quite apart from the Bible, quite apart from atheism, are not the imaginary, or incoherent, or capricious selection from a variety of principles, resting merely or only on my authority—they were principles which we had acquired by the slow accretion of controversy, by contesting for them from platform to platform all over the country; and when they were drawn up, I submitted them in the aggregate form, many years after they had been separately formulated, to Mr

J. S. Mill, and asked him whether or not, in his judgment, we had made such a statement of secular principles as were worthy to stand as self-defensive principles of the working class, as an independent mode of opinion which should no longer involve them in the necessity of taking on their shoulders the responsibility of an atheistic or infidel propagandism except when it suited the purpose of a member to do it. He admitted it in terms which it was a reward to read. It was not until we had the sanction of one so competent to judge, that these principles were promulgated in a definite manner as the principles of a party. The reason they were drawn up in the form ultimately submitted to the public was this: we found in a memorable address by Sir James Stephen, at Cambridge, it was represented that Mr Grote, Mr Mill, and other eminent philosophers whom he named, had been so outraged by the offensive observations of the clergy—by their charging every man of science with infidelity, scepticism, or atheism—that they refused any longer to take notice of Christianity; they had withdrawn from it, they stood apart from it, they constructed a system of their own, they had a philosophy of their own, they had principles whereby they regulated their own line of conduct; and when the minister spoke they no longer felt called upon to regard him; they could deny his authority to give an opinion on

their proceedings. The clergyman applies to them, but they make no response; he preaches his doctrine, but they condescend to no criticism. The result is, the clergyman, when too late, has to exclaim, 'The philosophers pass us by, they ignore Christianity, and in the end we shall have to become suppliants for their attention, because we repelled them when they were suppliants for ours.' Now it struck me, that was a far prouder and more triumphant thing to accomplish than any wild warring against theologians; we were at the mercy of their overwhelming power. My purpose was to put into the hands of the working classes principles which should serve their purpose in the same way, and make them equally independent and equally proud, defiant, and unassailable."

This seems to me to be an argument of a lower type. It is an appeal to policy such as one would scarcely have expected from Mr Holyoake. A man who had so courageously avowed the most unpopular sentiments regarding religion, and so unflinchingly borne the consequences, might well have been supposed little to admire the conduct of any one who, however eminent, should shrink from the responsibility implied in the conviction that Christianity is a gigantic delusion, and venture only to attack it secretly, anonymously, or posthumously. If Christianity be, in the judgment of any person, an imposture, which has pro-

duced, and is daily producing, a host of moral, social, and political evils, how can he, as an honest man, take no notice of it, or even slight notice of it? Is he not as much bound earnestly to assail it as one who esteems it an incalculable blessing is bound zealously to defend and propagate it? Is he not all the more bound to oppose it, because its influence is wide and powerful? He who is not for it must be against it. Neutrality is logically and morally impossible. Reason and conscience prescribe a policy which must be conformed to whatever expediency may suggest, and that policy is not one of concealment and evasion. But even an expediency which is real and not merely apparent, universal and not simply individual, must declare against the course recommended by Mr Holyoake. Supposing Sir James Stephen's account of the conduct of Mr Grote, Mr Mill, &c., to have been correct, was the policy attributed to them really beneficial to any person but themselves, and those whom they regarded as their opponents? Mr Grote writing his 'History of Greece,' and Mr Mill writing his 'Logic,' were, no doubt, admirably employed, and deservedly meriting the gratitude of their contemporaries and of posterity; but what did they effect thereby against Christianity? How did they injure it by ignoring it? Who were the clergymen who became suppliants for their attention? Was there any clergy-

man so stupid as to expect that Christianity should be either attacked or defended in a 'History of Greece,' or in a scientific treatise on 'Logic'? The policy ascribed to Mr Grote and Mr Mill is as absurd as would be that of an admiral who, if ordered to reduce Cronstadt, should, by way of carrying out his commission, stay in London and write a work on mechanics or navigation. That might be good policy for him, but it would have little effect on Cronstadt. Christianity cannot and will not leave secularism alone. If it have any belief in itself, any life and sincerity, it must attack by all fair means a system so utterly alien to itself. Is secularism prepared to renounce the right of reply and counter-attack? I should be rejoiced to hear it; but I must candidly admit that the reasons of my satisfaction would be a conviction that the policy would prove a very bad one for secularism, and, still more, the belief that its adoption might be accepted as a sign that secularists distrusted their power to refute the claims of Christianity.

I fail to see, then, that Mr Holyoake's position is at all an intelligible one. Mr Bradlaugh's I quite understand; indeed, it would be rather difficult not to understand words like these: "What we say is, and what you do not say is, that theological teachings prevent human improvement, and that it is the duty of every secularist to make

active war on theological teachings. It is no use saying, ignore the clergy. You cannot talk of ignoring St Paul's Cathedral—it is too high. You cannot talk of ignoring the Religious Tract Society—it is too wealthy. You cannot talk of ignoring Oxford and Cambridge Universities—they are too well endowed. They command too many parties to enable you to ignore their power, but you may strive to crush it out a little at a time. You cannot strike all errors effectually at once, but you can strike at some and encourage others to strike too. This is the secularist's work Paine and Carlile cut out years ago. This is the secularist's work Southwell and yourself undertook. This is the secularist's work in which every man has got his share to do, who feels as I feel. The secularist's work which we have to do is to cut down, as my friend put it, the banyan-tree of superstition, which tree seeks to send its roots down into every baby brain, and which holds by the habit-faith of the rich, and by the ignorant credulity of the poor. Every branch of this superstitious tree bears poisonous fruit; but before you can get the branches effectively destroyed, you must cut away the roots as well as gently train the tree. The upas-tree of religion overspreads the whole earth; it hides with its thick foliage of churchcraft the rays of truth from humankind, and we must cut at its root and

strip away its branches that reason's rays may go shining through, and give fertility to the human soil, long hidden from their genial warmth."

There can be no doubt what this means; no doubt that it signifies war,—war open and incessant—a war of life and death—war to the uttermost. So be it. There really is, I believe, no other relationship possible between religion and secularism.[1]

II.

Let us now proceed to the consideration of the leading positive principles of secularism.

The first of these, as stated by Mr Holyoake, is, "That precedence should be given to the duties of this life over those which pertain to another life." And the reason alleged for it is, that "this life being the first in certainty, ought to have the first place in importance." "We do not say that every man ought to give an *exclusive* attention to this world, because that would be to commit the old sin of dogmatism, and exclude the possibility of another world, and of walking by different light from that by which alone we are able to walk. But as our *knowledge* is confined to this life, and testimony and conjecture and probability are all that can be set forth with respect

[1] See Appendix XXIII.

to another life, we think we are justified in giving *precedence* to the duties of this state, and of attaching primary importance to the morality of man to man."[1]

Mr Holyoake expresses his principle in this form so that he may not exclude theists from the secularist ranks. The message of secularism to them is, Be more worldly and less pious; think much about this world and little about the next; much about man and little about God. I know no message which the world needs less, seeing that it is one which not only avowed secularists, but millions of professed Christians, are already acting on with all their might. It is true, however, that all but convinced atheists and the most careless of men have hitherto felt that doing so was wrong and inexcusable. There are few men even among those most engrossed by the cares and interests of this present life, who have not at times felt that there is another life of which it were well to think more. Bibles and religious books, sermons and Sundays, the monitions of conscience, the reflections of reason, "sorrow dogging sin, afflictions sorted, anguish of all sizes," the rapid flight of time, the instability of human things, the loss of friends, the warnings of disease, the prognostications of death, all speak of the claims of eternity; and few have not thereby

[1] 'Discussion between the Rev. Brewin Grant and G. J. Holyoake' (London, 1853), p. 39.

been sometimes at least transiently impressed with the conviction that these claims had been sadly neglected. But secularism scouts the idea. It says to the merely nominal Christian, to the man who lives as if his religion were a dream or a lie, that he is quite right; and it says this, if Mr Holyoake be a correct interpreter of it, not on the ground that religion is a delusion or a lie, but on the ground that the present life is more certain and more important than another life.

This would be a very comfortable doctrine to many minds, if it were not so irrational that only very few will be able to believe it. There is nothing particularly certain about the present life. What is certain even about the present moment, except that before you can so much as think of it it has already ceased to be, and you can no longer either discharge duty or enjoy pleasure in it? The present is so evanescent that it hardly concerns us at all. And as to the future, who is certain of what a day or an hour will bring forth? Who can reckon with confidence on to-morrow? We may easily be far more certain of the existence of God and of the immortality of the soul than that we shall be alive on the morrow. The one thing certain about this life is that it is uncertain. And as it is not only uncertain but short at the longest, the notion that it can be more important than eternal life is a fancy for which there can be no possible warrant.

The secularist principle in question is erroneous for this further reason, that it falsely distinguishes duties into duties of this life and duties which pertain to another life. That is not a distinction which can be reasonably defended. If there be a God, the duties which we owe to Him are duties of this life. If there be a future world, it is our *present* duty to take full account of that fact. On the other hand, all our duties are duties to God, and the way in which all our duties are discharged will have an influence on our eternal destiny. There is thus no absolute separation possible between secular and spiritual duties; and still less can they be rationally opposed. A man who neglects any of his so-called secular duties must look for God's disapproval. He who would live a truly pious life must work the works of integrity and uprightness, of benevolence and mercy, of temperance, prudence, and industry. A man will surely not do his duty in and for this world worse but better because he feels that God blesses his efforts in the cause of truth and goodness; and that when the labours of life are ended, he will, if he have acquitted himself faithfully, enter not into utter annihilation but into eternal happiness.

It is, then, most irrational and improper advice to tell a man who believes it even probable that there is a God, or that there is a future world, that he may be comparatively heedless of his duties

and interests as regards them without guilt or danger. If a man disbelieve in God and the future world, or believe that nothing can be known about them, he cannot, of course, be reasonably expected to give them even a subordinate place either in thought or practice. He can owe no duty to what does not exist,—no thought to the unknowable. If this world be all that our intellects can apprehend, our sole attention should be given to it. Secularism, in order to be self-consistent, must be complete, must be as exclusive as Christianity, must demand for the world our whole mind and heart, our whole strength and life. But in this form it is obviously a doctrine which none but convinced and confirmed atheists can do otherwise than utterly repudiate. It is a doctrine, also, by which the world will only lose. No good cause on earth will be more energetically promoted, no evil cause will be more energetically opposed, without faith in God and His eternal mercy and justice than with it. Where the love of God is not, love to man will certainly not be stronger in consequence.

A second secularist principle is, that "science is the providence of man, and that absolute spiritual dependency may involve material destruction." If men, we are told, would have things go well with them, they must discover and apply the laws of nature. They must learn what is true before they can do what is right, or can so act as to secure

happiness. Evil can be warded off and good can be obtained only by following the directions of science; prayer is useless, experience proving that it receives no answer; dependence on providence is a delusion, as we are under the dominion of general laws, and special providence there is none.

This is the substance of an argument which in Mr Holyoake's hands assumes many forms, and which all secularists often employ. There is nothing true in it, however, to which the theist cannot cordially assent. He believes that every law discovered by science is a law of God to which man is bound to pay due respect. The whole of science is more sacred to him than it can possibly be to the secularist, for, in addition to having the sacredness of truth, it has the sacredness of being a manifestation of God's character and will. Unless a very unintelligent and inconsistent man, indeed, he must feel more deeply than the secularist that every truth of science is entitled to his reverence, and to such obedience as he can give to it. He can make no exclusions, exceptions, or reservations, but must accept science in all its length and breadth, so far as his powers and opportunities extend. Secularism has no peculiar, and still less any exclusive, right to science. Theism has at least an equal claim to it, and to whatever good can be derived from it.

All that properly belongs to secularism is the

denial of the utility of prayer and the existence of providence. It opposes science to prayer and providence. But this is what those who believe in the two latter never do, so that the prayer and providence attacked by secularism are conceptions or misconceptions of its own. The theist believes in prayer, but he does not believe in mere prayer—in prayer which despises the use of means—in prayer which dispenses with watching and working. He believes in providence, but he does not believe in tempting providence—in casting himself down from a height with the expectation that angels will take charge of him—in a spiritual dependency which neglects the aids to material safety. The man who truly prays cannot credit the allegation that experience proves that prayer receives no answer. That is not his experience. He is conscious of having daily asked for spiritual blessings, and conscious of having daily received them. He knows a sphere of existence in which not the exception to the law but the law itself is, Seek and ye shall find, Ask and it shall be given unto you—a realm where sincere and earnest petitions are always directly accomplished. There are innumerable blessings, unfortunately unknown and unvalued by the secularist, although they are far more real and precious than bodily and external advantages; and these blessings, which science does not pretend to offer us, and which general laws

do not bring us, unless prayer itself be included among general laws, the experience of all who have sincerely asked them, or, in equivalent terms, the experience of all who have truly prayed testifies, are never withheld. In asking for these blessings, which are the main objects of prayer, we can ask unconditionally and absolutely, directly and definitely, not even needing, as it were, to say, Thy will be done, since we already assuredly know that God's will is to grant them to whoever truly asks them, while He will not, yea cannot, grant them to those who do not ask. Other blessings, however seemingly desirable, reasonable and pious men seek only in subordination to spiritual blessings. They never ask for them except conditionally. They are conscious that what they think best may be really bad, and that what mere nature shrinks from most may be for their highest good. They ask, therefore, for apparent temporal good only in so far as it may be agreeable to God to give it, and with the added supplication that He will give or withhold according to His pleasure, since His pleasure is ever in His children's welfare. All true prayer for temporal things is essentially prayer that God's will in regard to these things may become our will, through our will being elevated and conformed to His; it certainly never is prayer that His will, whether hid in His eternal counsels or expressed in His gen-

eral laws, should yield and give place to a will so blind and arbitrary as ours. There is no evidence that a single true prayer has been unanswered. There is the evidence of every truly prayerful man's experience that prayer is daily answered, and that it brings light, and strength, and blessing where science is utterly powerless and useless.

Science is admirable, and we grudge it no praise to which it is entitled; but we must deny that it can be a substitute for providence. It is at the utmost an indication of some of the rules—a delineation of part of the plan—of providence. It has no existence in itself, no power of its own. It is but a name for a kind of human knowledge, which must be appropriated and applied by a human mind before it can be of any avail. It will only be of use to us if we make use of it. We may either make a good or a bad use of it. We constantly see it employed to injure men as well as to benefit them. There is as much science displayed on the battle-field as in the hospital or the factory. The possession of it is no guarantee whatever that it will be honourably and beneficially employed. To use science worthily and well we must not only be conversant with it, but we must be good men. How are men to be good, however—how are they to have right affections and aims—without dependence on God, without prayer, without Divine grace? This is a problem

which secularism must consider far more seriously than it has done. Science does not make men good; and where men are bad, science will be perverted to the service of evil. But surely nothing which is merely instrumental, and especially nothing which can be perverted, is properly designated providence.

The third fundamental principle of secularism is, that man has an adequate rule of life independently of belief in God, immortality, or revelation. Morality and not religion, it maintains, is our business. The former is not based on the latter, nor inseparable from it, nor even advantageously associated with it. We can and ought to disjoin them. Abandoning religion, we should cultivate a purely natural and human morality. An adequate standard of such morality, secularists generally believe, may be found in utility. Secularism has practically adopted utilitarianism as its ethical doctrine, and maintains that it supplies a guide of conduct which is independent of religion.

Now I do not oppose secularism at this point by arguing that morality is founded on religion. It is, on the whole, more correct to say that religion is founded on morality than that morality is founded on religion. We cannot know God as a moral Being to whom we stand in moral relations, if we have no moral notions until we know God, if we are unconscious of moral relationship

until conscious of Divine relationship. A man, we admit, may endeavour to regulate, and may so far actually regulate, his life, from a regard to what is due to humanity, without any reference to God. He may attend to what reason and conscience tell him should be his conduct to his fellow-men, the lower animals, and himself, and put away every idea of duty to the Divine Being, of regard to the Divine will. But clearly this morality is most defective unless it can justify itself by proof that there is no God, or that nothing is due to God. If there be a God, and especially if God be the very author of our moral nature and the moral law, to pay no moral regard to Him must be most wicked behaviour. If there be a God, morality must be as incomplete when religious duties are neglected as it would be were no attention given to personal or social duties.

Further, the morality which ignores religion is inherently weak because inherently self-contradictory. There is in the very nature of the moral law a reference to God which cannot be denied without disrespect to its whole authority. The law bids man sacrifice pleasure, property, reputation, life itself, everything, if need be, to duty. But can this moral law be a righteous and rational law on any other supposition than that the sacrifice will not be in vain, and that the power which, through conscience, demands the sacrifice, will

justify the demand by the final issue of things, the eventual victory of the right over pleasure and expediency? I cannot see how it can. The notion of a law demanding that a man should sacrifice not merely apparent to real good, or a lower to a higher good, but his real and highest good—that he should lose life and soul without hope of finding them again—is the notion of a moral law which is profoundly immoral. Conscience in enjoining such a law must be at hopeless variance with reason and with itself. If a man say, "I will not obey such a law," conscience will condemn him, and yet it must also acquit him and condemn itself. In other words, conscience and moral law require, in order to be self-consistent and reasonable, to be supplemented by the notion of a moral government and a moral Governor. The demands of duty necessarily imply that both humanity and nature are under the rule of a God of righteousness and are moving onwards to a moral goal—the triumph of goodness. "It is not enough to know," says Ullmann, "that the good has a certain authority and supreme right given it by man. No; we must possess a much higher assurance; we must be convinced that the final triumph of goodness is a part of the grand world-plan; that the great design of creation, the reason for which the world exists, is, that goodness may come to its full realisation. And this certainly can be gained only

from the conviction that the moral law of human life has its source in the very same power which called the whole economy of the world into existence, and which is conducting it to its goal. If, then, the moral law be necessarily derived from a personal Being, even from Him who created and governs the universe, then is the source of the moral law none other than the living, the personal God."

Again, religion may be admitted not to be the foundation of morality and yet maintained to be a sanction of morality, which supplies to it motive and inspiration. In this respect its moral value may be immense. What do all men stand so much in need of as motive power to love and do what is right? Our moral theories may be unexceptionable, while our moral practices are inexcusable. We may have a clear and accurate apprehension of the whole moral code, and yet not the heart or will to execute aright a single precept of it. To know the moral law is not enough; to do it—in all its length and breadth—with the whole heart, strength, and might, is what is required. Whence are we to get power to do it apart from religion? The best men the world has seen have confessed in all ages that they could not find this power in themselves, and were even certain that it was not in themselves. The more I interrogate consciousness and history, the more

convinced I become that they were not deluded, and that if we feel differently it is not because we are better or know better than they, but because we are worse and know ourselves worse. It is only through a power above nature that nature can be raised above itself, and that morality can be "lighted up with the emotion and inspiration needful for carrying the sage along the narrow way perfectly, for carrying the ordinary man along it at all." And how can a man fail to draw strength from faith in God? How can he believe in a God of perfect justice without being encouraged and strengthened to do justice? or in a God of love without having a powerful inducement to love all the creatures of God, and to perform works of love? Is there no power to arrest and restrain from evil and ruin, in the dread of the Divine displeasure against sin? Can a desire to do wrong even exist along with a vivid realisation of His presence in any heart? The saintly Leighton spoke from experience, and so as to give expression to the experience of thousands of the most excellent of the earth when he said: "One glance of God, a touch of His love, will free and enlarge the heart, so that it can deny all, and part with all, and make an entire renouncing of all, to follow Him." Now, if I am to defer to experience, to facts, to induction, I cannot disregard this experience, especially as it is

just what reason would lead me to expect. The secularist may tell me that he has no such experience. Of course he has not; he could not be a secularist if he had. But that one man lacks is no evidence that another man does not possess; the absence of experience is not counter-experience. I may even be free to think that secularist worth at its best—and I have no wish to disparage it—falls greatly short of saintly excellence, and that the want of the experience mentioned is precisely what explains why it does.

Atheism—secularism—shuts out, then, some of the most impressive motives to virtuous conduct by relieving men from a sense of responsibility to a Supreme Being, and excluding from view His universal presence and infinite perfection; whereas religion leaves all secular motives to morality intact, while it adds to them spiritual motives of vast efficacy and of the most elevating and purifying character.

The alliance of secularism with utilitarianism has not, I think, strengthened the former in any way, but merely narrowed it. Utilitarianism is one of several doubtful and disputed theories in the philosophy of ethics which can only be independently and intelligently estimated by specially disciplined students. Ordinary men, secularists included, must leave theories as to the foundation of morality to philosophers, or take them on trust

from philosophers. The mass of secularists can be utilitarians merely by electing on very insufficient grounds to be led by Mr J. S. Mill and Professor Bain beyond their depth. They would be wiser to keep on the bank, or at least to keep in shallow water.

Neither the theist nor the Christian is called upon to refute utilitarianism, because neither theism nor Christianity commits its adherents to any theory as to the foundation of rectitude. Utilitarianism in itself is neither atheistical nor unchristian. It is clear that if there be a God and a future life, utilitarianism cannot afford to omit them from its calculations. If there be a God, utility must be the indication of His will, and it must be useful to attend to His will. If there be a future life, it must be a very absurd kind of utilitarianism which, while resting all morality on pleasure and pain, yet overlooks in its reckonings those pleasures and pains which are far the greatest of all. At the same time, utilitarianism is, I hold, a speculation which no person has yet proved, which has only been supported by reasonings in which causes and consequences have been strangely confounded, which proceeds from narrow and erroneous conceptions as to the constitution of human nature, and which presents no adequate barrier to the most unworthy views of morality. It starts from the supposition that

pleasure is the sole end of life, the one thing desirable; yet if such were the case, the selfish system, not utilitarianism, would be the correct system of ethics, and there would be no real morality at all. If pleasure be the one thing a man naturally desires, that pleasure must be his own, and he can only seek the pleasure of others so far as that may be conducive to his own and for the sake of his own,—he can never do good to others for their sake and have as much regard to the pleasures of others as his own. Of course, utilitarianism, notwithstanding this, inculcates disinterestedness, bids us sacrifice our individual interest to the general interest. But in the name of what does it bid us do so? Is it in the name merely of interest? If interest as such is the chief end of man, why should I sacrifice my own to that of others? If the supreme good of life is happiness, why am I not to conclude that the supreme good of *my* life is *my* happiness? Utilitarianism has no satisfactory answer to these questions. Mr Mill, on whom chiefly secularists rely with unreasoned confidence, did not even venture to attempt to answer them, but contented himself with merely telling us, what nobody denied, that utilitarianism inculcates disinterestedness. I must not embark, however, on the *mare magnum* of utilitarianism.

Enough has now been said, perhaps, to show that secularism has nothing true to offer to any

class of men which they may not find elsewhere, dissociated from the errors, the negations, which characterise this phase of unbelief. This would probably not fail to be almost universally seen and acknowledged if those who in the higher ranks of life make profession of religion would display a heartier and a manlier interest in those who are in the lower ranks, so that no man might be tempted to believe that religion is one of the things which stand either in the way of his personal happiness or of justice to his class.[1]

[1] See Appendix XXIV.

LECTURE VII.

ARE THERE TRIBES OF ATHEISTS?

In the first Lecture of this course I stated that some authors had denied that there were any real or sincere atheists, but that I did not see how this view could be successfully maintained. In recent times a very different view has found a large number of advocates. It has been argued that religion, so far from being a universal, is not even a general characteristic of man; that so far from there being no atheists in the world, there are numerous tribes, and even some highly cultivated nations, wholly composed of atheists. The belief to which in ancient times Cicero and Plutarch in well-known passages gave eloquent expression—the belief that wherever men exist they have some form of religion—can no longer be taken for granted; for many now assert, and some have laboured to prove, that there are peoples who have neither religious ideas, nor gods, nor any kind of worship. I

shall now examine this view; but before entering on its direct discussion, a few preliminary remarks seem necessary.

First, then, the question, Are there entire tribes and nations which have no religious beliefs or practices whatever? is a question as to a matter of fact. It ought to be decided, therefore, solely by an appeal to facts. But it is very apt to be decided, and has very often been decided, by the theological or philosophical prepossessions of those who have undertaken to answer it. Men like Büchner, Pouchet, O. Schmidt, show by the very tone in which they pronounce many of the lower tribes of men to be totally devoid of religious sentiments, that they deem this to be a stroke which tells strongly against religion. It is impossible, I think, for an impartial person, even were he on the whole to approve of their conclusion, to read what they have written, and to mark how they have written, on this subject, without perceiving that they have been more animated by dislike of religion than by the love of truth. On the other hand, with many it is a foregone conclusion that religion must be universal; and their reason for affirming it to be universal is, not that the relevant facts prove this, but that the honour of religion seems to them to require it. Now on neither side can this be justified. The truth alone ought to be sought, and it can only be found in the facts. The answer to the

question, Are there peoples without religion? ought, if legitimately obtained, to be taken into account in deciding whether or not man is an essentially religious being; but it is not legitimately obtained if deduced from a foregone conclusion on that subject. Its place is among the premisses of an argument for or against the proposition that religion is rooted in man's very nature, not among corollaries from it.

There need not, perhaps, be great anxiety on either side to arrive at a particular answer. Were it made out that there are some degraded tribes which have no conception of the supernatural, little, it seems to me, would be proved either for or against religion. It would only show that circumstances might be so unfavourable, and the minds of men so inactive, dark, and debased, that the religious principles or tendencies of human nature could not manifest themselves. Of course, if it were adequately proved that atheism is so very widely prevalent as some maintain,—if it were established, in other words, that not only a great number of barbarous and semi-barbarous peoples are devoid of all religion, but that the many millions of Buddhists in China and Japan are strictly and properly atheists,—atheism would have considerable reason for exultation. For, though even that would certainly not prove atheism true or theism false, it would convince unprejudiced minds that

human nature was not constitutionally framed for religion. It would very much weaken, if it did not destroy, the weighty argument for religion which the religious history of man presents. Still we have manifestly no right to reject the view that atheism is thus widely spread, merely because we dislike some of the inferences which would follow from it. We are bound to ask, Is it thus widely spread?—a question which can only be answered by an appeal to facts; and facts ought always to be studied with minds as free as possible from preconceptions.

Not a few of the writers who have recently discussed the subject have been intent on showing that the facts conform to the Darwinian or some other theory of development. They have adapted the facts to their theory, instead of testing their theory by the facts. This is, of course, an unscientific and erroneous mode of procedure. And, it may be added, it is one to which the development theory does not logically require us to have recourse. It is as consistent with even the Darwinian form of the development theory that the origin of religion should be at any one point as at any other. It may have been antecedent to the origin of man, contemporaneous with it, or subsequent to it.[1]

I remark, in the second place, that great care and caution require to be exercised before we draw a negative conclusion in a matter of the kind under

[1] See Appendix XXV.

consideration. The question belongs to one of the least advanced of sciences—the science of comparative psychology. The religious characteristics of men are mental peculiarities which can only be successfully studied by those who are accustomed to trace and analyse mental processes. But how few of those who travel among savage peoples have received any instruction in mental science, and how little mental science is there of a kind calculated to serve as a guide to the correct observation and interpretation of intellectual, moral, and religious phenomena! The men who write those books of travels in which distant lands and savage peoples are described, are often more than ordinarily conversant with zoology, botany, and other physical sciences, and they can describe accurately plants, animals, geological and meteorological facts, the bodily peculiarities of human beings, weapons, canoes, &c., but they very seldom give much trustworthy information as to the mental operations of the aborigines with whom they have come into contact. Even such eminent observers of outward nature as Mr Wallace and Mr Bates, for example, were obviously able to make out extremely little as to the inner life of the Amazonian tribes. When a traveller tells us that he found among the natives of some barbarous land no traces of religious belief, we must consider whether or not he had the means and opportunities required

to arrive at the truth in the matter; whether or not he was sufficiently master of the tribal language to converse easily in it; whether or not he had so thoroughly gained the confidence of those whose religious beliefs he sought to ascertain that they were quite open and unreserved in communicating to him their most secret and most sacred thoughts and feelings; whether or not his inquiries were of a really intelligent kind; how far these inquiries extended; how far the impression which he derived from his intercourse with some individuals might have been modified if he had had more intercourse with other individuals of the same community; whether he knew much, little, or nothing of their songs and traditions, &c. A foreigner is very rarely a competent and impartial judge. It is so even with respect to civilised peoples, and must be still more so with respect to barbarous peoples. After years of residence in England, a Frenchman's book on English life is apt to be on many points amusingly absurd. What must, then, the liabilities to error be in the case of countries rarely or never visited before, and which the traveller merely hurries through, knowing imperfectly or not at all the languages spoken? In savage countries the stranger is generally an object of dislike, or at least of distrust. Disinterested curiosity is what an uncivilised man cannot understand, and to question him is often of itself

sufficient to render him suspicious and evasive. He is, in general, specially averse to being questioned about his religious beliefs. It doubtless seems to him a sort of profanation to converse regarding them with one whom he perceives to despise them, and a humiliation to give expression to his vague feelings and incoherent convictions on such matters before one whom he cannot but feel to be intellectually above him. If the questioner be a missionary seeking to propagate the principles of his own faith, of course the barbarian is all the more likely to take refuge in silence and feigned ignorance.

In confirmation of these remarks, I may quote the following sentences from the valuable work of Mr Tylor on 'Primitive Culture.' He says: "Even with much time, and care, and knowledge of language, it is not always easy to elicit from savages the details of their theology. They try to hide from the prying and contemptuous foreigner their worship of gods who seem to shrink, like their worshippers, before the white man and his mightier Deity. Mr. Sproat's experience in Vancouver's Island is an apt example of this state of things. He says: 'I was two years among the Ahts, with my mind constantly directed towards the subject of their religious beliefs, before I could discover that they possessed any ideas as to an overruling power or a future state of existence. The traders

on the coast, and other persons well acquainted with the people, told me that they had no such ideas, and this opinion was confirmed by conversation with many of the less intelligent savages; but at last I succeeded in getting a satisfactory clue.' It then appeared that the Ahts had all the time been hiding a whole characteristic system of religious doctrines as to souls and their migrations, the spirits who do good and ill to men, and the great gods above all. Thus, even where no positive proof of religious ideas among any particular tribe has reached us, we should distrust its denial by observers whose acquaintance with the tribe in question has not been intimate as well as kindly."

I would remark, in the third place, that we must beware of denying that a rude and feebly developed religion is religion at all. We must not expect too much. Many who have affirmed that such and such peoples were destitute of religion have done so because these peoples did not believe in one supreme God, or had no proper conception of a Creator or Moral Governor. They have identified religion with theism, and represented as destitute of religion tribes whose doctrines fell so far short of their own that they thought them unworthy to be designated religious. As the early Christians were called atheists because they disowned the gods of pagan Rome, so several heathen tribes have been called atheists by those who could find

among them no traces of belief in the one true God ; or if not called atheists they have been said to have no religion but merely superstitions. Testimony of this kind, however, is quite worthless when the point to be decided is whether religion is universal or not. Superstition, as understood by the writers referred to, just means false religion, and the presence of false religion is as good evidence of the existence of religion as the presence of true religion. The distinction between religion and superstition is a very important one in its proper place, but it has no relevancy here, and the employment of it in this connection is a sure sign of confusion of thought. We have no right to identify religion with particular phases of religion. We have no right to pronounce a low or bad religion no religion at all. We have no right to include in our definition of religion the belief in one Supreme Being, in the creation of the world, in the immortality of the soul, or a regulated outward worship, or a priesthood, &c. We are inquiring whether or not religion in some form is everywhere to be discovered ; and in order to arrive at a correct answer, we must not ignore or discard any form of it, however humble or ignoble, however undeveloped or degenerate.

We must be content with a minimum definition, —with the definition which comprehends all phenomena admitted to be religious. Perhaps if we say

that religion is man's belief in a being or beings mightier than himself, and inaccessible to his senses, but not indifferent to his sentiments and actions, with the feelings and practices which flow from such belief, we have a definition of the kind required — one excluding nothing which can be called religion, and including nothing which is only partially present in religion. It is in this its widest sense that we have to understand religion when we discuss whether or not there are peoples destitute of religion.

Of the recent writers who have undertaken to show that there are peoples wholly without religious ideas, feelings, or practices, Sir John Lubbock is, so far as I am aware, entitled to the credit of having bestowed most care on the argument. He has certainly written with more knowledge and in a more scientific spirit than Büchner, Pouchet, O. Schmidt, or Moritz Wagner. He has brought together a much larger number of apparent facts than any one else on the same side has done. He has presented them in a manner to which, so far as tone and temper are concerned, no objection can be fairly taken. If he err, as I think he does, it is only his science which is at fault. I shall follow, therefore, his statement of the argument against the universality of religion, as presented in the last edition of his 'Prehistoric Times,' and examine it paragraph by paragraph, as there

seems to be no other way of satisfactorily dealing with it.

Sir John Lubbock writes, then, thus: "According to Spix and Martius, Bates, and Wallace, some of the Brazilian Indians were entirely without religion. Burmeister confirms this statement, and in the list of the principal tribes of the valley of the Amazons, published by the Hakluyt Society, the Chuncos are stated 'to have no religion whatever,' and we are told that the Curetus 'have no idea of a Supreme Being.' The Tupinambas of Brazil had no religion. The South American Indians of the Gran Chaco are said by the missionaries to have 'no religious or idolatrous belief or worship whatever; neither do they possess any idea of a God, or of a Supreme Being. They make no distinction between right and wrong, and have therefore neither fear nor hope of any present or future punishment or reward, nor any mysterious terror of some supernatural power, whom they might seek to assuage by sacrifices or superstitious rites.' Bates tells us 'that some of the Indian tribes on the Upper Amazons have no idea of a Supreme Being, and consequently have no word to express it in their own languages.' Azara also makes the same statement as regards many of the South American tribes visited by him."

These are Sir John Lubbock's instances from South American tribes. But I find that they are

all either erroneous or insufficiently established. Gerland ('Anthropologische Beiträge,' i. 283) has correctly pointed out that the passage of Spix and Martius to which Sir J. Lubbock refers, instead of saying that the Brazilian Indians were entirely without religion, tells us that, although engrossed in the present, they had a certain reverence for the moon and particular stars, believed in a Principle of Evil, had priests who professed to have intercourse with demons, and highly honoured certain animals which they supposed to be messengers from the dead. This is a very different story indeed. I do not doubt that, "in the list of the principal tribes of the valley of the Amazons, published by the Hakluyt Society, the Chuncos are stated 'to have no religion whatever,' and we are told that the Curetus have no idea of a Supreme Being;'" but what proof is there that these statements are not unwarranted? It will never do to believe such statements—sweeping negatives—merely because they happen to be printed. The assertion that the Tupinambas of Brazil had no religion is not to be received. It is unsupported by any positive evidence; contradicted by the testimony of Stade, for example, who was nine months a prisoner among them; and inconsistent with the fact that several later writers have described the religion of the Tupi race. Tupan, the thunder-god, was the chief deity. The mis-

sionaries cited by Lubbock have obviously painted the Indians of the Gran Chaco in too sombre colours. Instead of making no distinction between right and wrong, the Indians of the Gran Chaco appear to be among the best of the American tribes. For example, they do not torture the prisoners whom they take in war, and treat kindly the captive women and children. About their mental life little is known, however, as they are irreconcilably hostile to their civilised neighbours, have no villages, and live very much on horseback. As to the assertion of Mr Bates, it rests on too narrow a conception of what religion is, which, as I have already said, must not be identified with belief in one Supreme Being, or in a Creator properly so called. Further, it greatly needs confirmation, being contrary to the facts and testimonies collected by J. G. Müller and by Waitz. It is inexplicable that Sir John Lubbock should have ignored as he does researches so well known and highly appreciated by students of the natural history of man. Then we should not only have been told that Don Felix de Azara denies religion to many of the American tribes visited by him, but also that he describes the religious beliefs and practices of the very tribes which he denies to have religion. This must strike every one who reads his work; and Valckenaer, D'Orbigny, and Tylor have called attention to it. His statement

that the tribes he visited had no religion needs no other contradiction than his own. I am glad to perceive that Lubbock does not include, as Locke and various writers have done, the Caribs among peoples without a religion, for they are known to have worshipped a god of the moon, of the sun, of the wind, of the sea, and a number of evil spirits, with Mabocha as their chief. But I think he might have told us that Humboldt, whose travels in South America were so extensive, whose explorations were so varied, scientific, and successful, and who was certainly uninfluenced by traditional theological beliefs, found no tribes and peoples without a religion; and that Prince Max von Neuwied, in all his many and wide wanderings in Brazil, tells us that he had found no tribes of which the members did not give manifest signs of religious feelings.[1]

Sir J. Lubbock thus proceeds: "Father Baegert, who lived as a missionary among the Indians of California for seventeen years, affirms that 'idols, temples, religious worship or ceremonies, were unknown to them, and that they neither believed in the true and only God, nor adored false deities;' and M. de Perouse also says that 'they had no knowledge of a God or of a future state.' Colden, who had ample means of judging, assures us that the celebrated 'five nations' of

[1] See Appendix XXVI.

Canada 'had no public worship nor any word for God;' and Hearne, who lived amongst the North American Indians for years, and was perfectly acquainted with their habits and language, says the same of some tribes on Hudson's Bay."

Now to the assertion of Father Baegert we may oppose a most interesting account of the faith of the Californians left by Father Boscana, one of the earliest missionaries to Upper California. Mr Bancroft, whose researches have been most laborious and extensive, informs us that "the Californian tribes, taken as a whole, are pretty uniform in the main features of their theogonic beliefs. They seem, without exception, to have had a hazy conception of a lofty, almost supreme being; for the most part referred to as a Great Man, the Old Man Above, the One Above; attributing to him, however, as is usual in such cases, nothing but the vaguest and most negative functions and qualities. The real practical power that most interested them, who had most to do with them and they with him, was a demon, or body of demons, of a tolerably pronounced character" (iii. 158). The view adopted by Sir J. Lubbock regarding the Californians is irreconcilable also with the series of testimonies adduced by Waitz. Then the negative reports of Colden (1755) and of Hearne (1769-1772) are not to be allowed to outweigh the contrary reports of numerous other

witnesses no less credible. Further, we are not justified in concluding that a people has no religion because it has "no public worship nor any word for God." It is clearly proved that the Canadian Indians believed in supernatural beings, and, in fact, in legions of spirits. The sorcery prevalent among them may be viewed as a perverted form of worship. The Koniagas even believe in a chief deity, the Thlinkets in a creator of all beings and things, the Haidahs suppose the great solar spirit to be the Creator and Supreme Ruler, &c. &c. Belief in a former of the universe is, in fact, the rule among the North American Indians. The exceptions are few and doubtful.[1]

Sir J. Lubbock, passing from North America to Polynesia and Australasia, thus continues: "In the 'Voyage de l'Astrolabe' it is stated that the natives of the Samoan and Solomon Islands in the Pacific had no religion; and in the 'Voyage of the Novara' the same is said of the Caroline Islanders. The Samoans 'have neither moraes, nor temples, nor altars, nor offerings, and consequently none of the sanguinary rites observed at the other groups. In consequence of this, the Samoans were considered an impious race; and their impiety became proverbial with the people of Rarotonga, for, when upbraiding a person who neglected the worship of the gods, they would call

[1] See Appendix XXVII.

him 'a godless Samoan.' On Damood Island, between Australia and New Guinea, Jukes could find no 'traces of any religious belief or observance.' Duradawan, a sepoy, who lived some time with the Andaman Islanders, maintained that they had no religion, and Dr Mouatt believes his statements to be correct. Some of the Australian tribes, also, are said to have no religion. In the Pellew Islands Wilson found no religious buildings, nor any sign of religion. Mr Wallace, who had excellent opportunities for judging, and whose merits as an observer no one can question, tells us that, among the people of Wanumbai, in the Aru Islands, he could find no trace of a religion; adding, however, that he was but a short time among them."

It is very strange that Sir John should continue through three editions of his work to represent the Samoan Islanders as destitute of religious beliefs. Williams, in the passage quoted, says nothing of the kind, but, what is very different indeed, that they were considered impious and called godless by their neighbours, because they did not worship in the same manner as they did. They were called "godless" by the people of Rarotonga, just as the early Christians were called godless by the pagan Romans. Williams merely cites the Rarotongan proverb, but Sir John asks us to endorse it. That is impossible, especially since the Rev

George Turner has given us, in his 'Nineteen Years in Polynesia' (1861), a valuable and elaborate account of the Samoan religion. That the natives of the Samoan Islands should ever have been stated to have no religion, shows only how little credit ought to be attached to general statements of the kind, when not founded on close and careful examination. The treachery and ferocity of the Solomon Islanders have prevented Europeans acquiring much acquaintance with their characters, but that they are not without religious beliefs is proved by their having idols, sometimes ten or more feet high, to which they make offerings of food. Gerland, one of the leading ethnologists of Germany, has shown that the inhabitants of the Caroline Islands are not destitute of religious conceptions. Jukes was but a short time in Damood Island, one of the Torres Islands, and Meinicke has described the religious beliefs prevalent in these islands. That "Duradawan, a sepoy, who lived some time with the Andaman Islanders, maintained that they had no religion,' by no means proves that they have none. A fai more intelligent man, Father Mersenne, so well known as the friend of Descartes, spent most of his life in Paris, and yet affirmed that there were sixty thousand atheists in that city. Dr Mouatt had no intimate or lengthened intercourse with the Andaman Islanders. Sir J. Lubbock does

injustice to Captain Wilson, who believed himself to have ascertained that the Pellew Islanders had some notions of a religion, and certainly believed in a future life. It is improbable that the Wanumbai are without religion, since it appears from the testimonies of Kolff, of Wallace himself, &c., that the other Aru Islanders are not. Gabelentz, in his work on the 'Melanesian Languages,' has shown that words for God, Spirit, &c., are very widely diffused over the Australasian and Polynesian areas. Our author perhaps deserves commendation for not having spoken more copiously and confidently about the Australian tribes. Most writers who maintain that the atheism of ignorance is man's original condition, lay great emphasis on the alleged absence of religion among the natives of Australia. But in doing so they rest on what is only alleged and not real. In proof, I may quote from Mr Tylor, who is admitted to be second to no one in this country as an ethnologist. He says: "It is not unusual for the very writer who declares in general terms the absence of religious phenomena among some savage people, himself to give evidence that shows his expressions to be misleading. Thus Dr Lang not only declares that the aborigines of Australia have no idea of a supreme divinity, creator, and judge—no object of worship, no idol, temple, or sacrifice, but that, 'in short, they have nothing

whatever of the character of religion, or of religious observance, to distinguish them from the beasts that perish.' More than one writer has since made use of this telling statement, but without referring to certain details which occur in the very same book. From these it appears that a disease like smallpox, which sometimes attacks the natives, is ascribed by them 'to the influence of Budyah, an evil spirit who delights in mischief;' that when the natives rob a wild bees' hive, they generally leave a little of the honey for Buddai; that at certain biennial gatherings of the Queensland tribes, young girls are slain in sacrifice to propitiate some evil divinity; and that, lastly, according to the evidence of the Rev. W. Ridley, 'whenever he has conversed with the aborigines, he found them to have definite traditions concerning supernatural beings, — Baiame, whose voice they hear in thunder; Turramullan, the chief of demons, who is the author of disease, mischief, and wisdom, and appears in the form of a serpent at their great assemblies,' &c. By the concurring testimony of a crowd of observers, it is known that the natives of Australia were at their discovery, and have since remained, a race with minds saturated with the most vivid belief in souls, demons, and deities."[1]

Sir John Lubbock next seeks proofs of his thesis

[1] See Appendix XXVIII.

in India. "The Yenadies and the Villees, according to Dr Short, are entirely without any belief in a future state; and again, Hooker tells us that the Lepchas of Northern India have no religion."

Now the former of these statements, even if true, is not relevant. Belief in a future state is not to be identified with religion. The ancient Hebrews have often been accused of ignorance of a future life, but no one has ever said that they were without any religion. Then, the account of Dr Hooker's testimony regarding the Lepchas is most inadequate and misleading. Here are Dr Hooker's words from his Himalayan Journals: "The Lepchas profess no religion, though acknowledging the existence of good and bad spirits. To the good they pay no heed. 'Why should we?' they say: 'the good spirits do us no harm; the evil spirits, who dwell in every rock, grove, and mountain, are constantly at mischief, and to them we must pray, for they hurt us.' Every tribe has a priest-doctor; he neither knows nor attempts to practise the healing art, but he is a pure exorcist, all bodily ailments being deemed the operation of devils, who are cast out by prayers and invocations. Still they acknowledge the Lamas to be very holy men, and were the latter only moderately active, they would soon convert all the Lepchas" (i 135). It was absurd and self-contradictory in Dr Hooker to begin these lines with the words, "The

Lepchas profess no religion." These words should clearly not have been there, and Sir J. Lubbock would then not have been able to improve them into "the Lepchas of Northern India have no religion." It is clear from Hooker's own words that such is very far from being the case. Substantially his account is in perfect agreement with that contained in Colonel Dalton's 'Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal, compiled from Official Documents.' Colonel Dalton, chiefly on the authority of Dr A. Campbell (see Note in the Journal of the Asiatic Society, Bengal, 1840), informs us that the Lepchas are mostly Buddhists, and have priests, who are educated partly at home and partly in the great monasteries of Thibet. All testimony regarding the Lepchas agrees in representing them as a physically handsome, constitutionally timid and peaceable, morally affectionate, and religiously susceptible people.

I pass on to what Sir John has to say of Africa, so far as the subject in hand is concerned. "Captain Grant could find 'no distinct form of religion' in some of the comparatively civilised tribes visited by him. According to Burchell, the Bachapins (Caffres) had no form of worship or religion. They thought 'that everything made itself, and that trees and herbs grew by their own will.' They had no belief in a good deity, but some vague idea of an evil being. Indeed the first idea of God is almost

always as an evil spirit. Speaking of the Foulahs of Wassoulo, in Central Africa, Caillié states: 'I tried to discover whether they had any religion of their own—whether they worshipped fetishes, or the sun, moon, or stars—but I could never perceive any religious ceremony among them.' Again, he says of the Bambaras, that, 'like the people of Wassoulo, they have no religion,—adding, however, that they have great faith in charms. Burton also states that some of the tribes in the lake districts of Central Africa 'admit neither God, nor angel, nor devil.' Speaking of Hottentots, Le Vaillant says: 'Je n'y ai vu aucune trace de religion, rien qui approche même de l'idée d'un être vengeur et rémunérateur. J'ai vécu assez longtemps avec eux, chez eux au sein de leurs déserts paisibles; j'ai fait, avec ces braves humains, des voyages dans des régions fort éloignées; nulle part je n'ai rencontré rien qui ressemble à la religion.' Livingstone mentions that on one occasion, after talking to a Bushman for some time, as he supposed, about the Deity, he found that the savage thought that he was speaking about Sekomi, the principal chief of the district."

This passage is as incorrect as those which precede it. Captain Grant, in his walk across Africa, could not be expected to acquire an intimate knowledge of the tribes he visited, and his not finding a "distinct form of religion" among some of these

tribes can be no proof of their not possessing even the rudiments of religion. The lower forms of religion are occasionally very indistinct. What Burchell affirms of the want of religion in a particular Caffre tribe, is more than counterbalanced by the fact that the Caffre tribes in general are well known to have religious beliefs and rites; while, even according to the account of Burchell, the tribe mentioned had a vague idea of an evil being. The Foulahs are mostly Mohammedans, and what Caillié says about the absence of religion among them can only be true of individuals over a limited area, and in exceptionally unfavourable circumstances. The warmest of Mr Burton's friends will hardly include among his merits caution and moderation either of judgment or statement. Le Vaillant's estimate of the Hottentots is inconsistent with the testimonies of many other travellers. The story about Livingstone and the Bushman probably illustrates merely the difficulty of conversational intercourse between a Scotchman and a Bushman. It should at least have been remembered that Livingstone has written in regard to the peoples of South Africa, "There is no need for beginning to tell even the most degraded of these people of the existence of a God, or of a future state—the facts being universally admitted. . . . On questioning intelligent men among the Backwains as to their former knowledge of good and

evil, of God, and of a future state, they have scouted the idea of any of them ever having been without a tolerably clear conception on all these subjects." Sir John Lubbock has done well not to endorse Sir Samuel Baker's statements as to tribes without religion visited by him in Central Africa. Their inaccuracy was generally detected as soon as published. Other travellers had discovered and described what Sir Samuel fancied did not exist. Professor O. Schmidt refers us to "the Niam-Niam, that highly interesting dwarf-people of Central Africa," as an example of a people "without a word for God." It so happens that the Niam-Niam are *not* a dwarf-people, and *have* a word for God. Prof. Schmidt should have known something about Schweinfurth's book before appealing to it.

The next case adduced by our author is very instructive. He writes: "Speaking of the Esquimaux, Ross says, 'Ervick, being the senior of the first party that came on board, was judged to be the most proper person to question on the subject of religion. I directed Sacheuse to ask him if he had any knowledge of a Supreme Being; but after trying every word used in his own language to express it, he could not make him understand what he meant. It was distinctly ascertained that he did not worship the sun, moon, stars, or any

[1] See Appendix XXIX.

image or living creature. When asked what the sun or moon was for, he said to give light. He had no knowledge or idea how he came into being, or of a future state; but said that when he died he would be put into the ground. Having fully ascertained that he had no idea of a beneficent Supreme Being, I proceeded, through Sacheuse, to inquire if he believed in an evil spirit; but he could not be made to understand what it meant. . . . He was positive that in this incantation he did not receive assistance from anything, nor could he be made to understand what a good or an evil spirit meant.'"

Now, I ask, is it reasonable to conclude from the fact that a single Esquimaux, when questioned by Captain Ross, through an interpreter who could only speak a different dialect from that of the person questioned, did not give evidence of possessing any definite ideas regarding a Divine Being, that there are Esquimaux peoples without any religious opinions or sentiments? The Esquimaux peoples are known to have a tolerably developed religion. They suppose the world to be ruled by various supernatural beings, who are overruled by a supreme being. To certain men, called "angakok," there is supposed to be granted a certain control over the ordinary deities for purposes of good.[1]

Sir John Lubbock thus concludes his argument: "In some cases travellers have arrived at their

[1] See Appendix XXX.

views very much to their own astonishment. Thus Father Dobritzhoffer says: 'Theologians agree in denying that any man in possession of his reason can, without a crime, remain ignorant of God for any length of time. This opinion I warmly defended in the University of Cordoba, where I finished the four years' course of theology begun at Gratz, in Styria. But what was my astonishment when, on removing from thence to a colony of Abipones, I found that the whole language of these savages does not contain a single word which expresses God or a divinity. To instruct them in religion, it was necessary to borrow the Spanish word for God, and insert into the catechism "Dios ecnam coogerik," "God the creator of things."' We have already observed a case of this kind in Kolben, who, in spite of the assertions of the natives themselves, felt quite sure that certain dances must be of a religious character, 'let the Hottentots say what they will.' Again, Mr Matthews, who went out to act as missionary among the Fuegians, but was soon obliged to abandon the hopeless task, observed only one act 'which could be supposed devotional.' He sometimes, we are told, 'heard a great howling or lamentation about sunrise in the morning; and upon asking Jemmy Button what occasioned the outcry, he could obtain no satisfactory answer: the boy only saying, "People very sad, cry very much."' This appears

so natural and sufficient an explanation, that why the outcry should be supposed devotional, I must confess myself unable to see. Once more, Dr Hooker states that the Khasias, an Indian tribe, had no religion. Colonel Yule, on the contrary, says that they have; but he admits that breaking hens' eggs is 'the principal part of their religious practice.' But if most travellers have expected to find a religion everywhere, and have been convinced, almost against their will, that the reverse is the case, it is quite possible that there may have been others who have too hastily denied the existence of a religion among the tribes they visited. However this may be, those who assert that even the lowest savages believe in a Supreme Deity, affirm that which is directly contrary to the evidence. The direct testimony of travellers on this point is indirectly corroborated by their other statements. How, for instance, can a people who are unable to count their own fingers, possibly raise their mind so far as to admit even the rudiments of a religion?"

On this paragraph I have to make the following remarks. Father Dobritzhoffer went out to the Abipones, expecting to find among them a know ledge of God, and not finding even a word to designate God, he concluded that they had no religion. He expected, that is to say, far too much; and not finding it, he concluded that there

was nothing whatever in the way of religion to find. Missionaries have erred thus very often. They have identified religion with true religion; and when they could not discover the latter, they have denied the existence of the former. From the want of a word for God in a language, it cannot be fairly inferred that those who use the language have no belief in gods, no religious notions or feelings. The Australians have no word for tree, or fish, or bird, but they are certainly not ignorant of trees, fishes, and birds. This is not all, for Dobritzhoffer, too, disproves his own assertion. He tells us how the Abipones paid a certain reverence to the stars, and, in particular, how they associated the Pleiades with a chief deity—a highest spiritual agent; how they believed in evil spirits, in sorcery, &c. As to Kolben and the Hottentots, I do not understand on what grounds Sir John Lubbock suppresses the fact that Kolben informs us that the Hottentots of his time had a firm faith in a supreme power, which they termed Gounya Tequoa, or the god of all gods, although they paid him no adoration; and that they had an evil deity, called Toutouka, whom they supposed to be the author of all mischief in the universe, and to whom they offered sacrifices in order to appease his ill-temper. That the Hottentots worship the moon is quite certain, apart from Kolben's testimony; and Sir John Lubbock had no right whatever to set

Kolben's testimony aside. The Fuegians are not known to have any well-defined notions of religion, but they have superstitions and conjurors. We require to wait for information as to what their beliefs really are. Mr Darwin and Mr Matthews seem to have been both dependent on the Jemmy Button mentioned by Sir John Lubbock in their inquiries regarding the religious sentiments of the Fuegians. I must confess I cannot consider Jemmy's explanation of the facts described by Mr Matthews as quite so satisfactory as Sir John thinks it. That people should cry very much when they are sad is natural enough; but the peculiarity of the case is the crying at a particular time, is the assembling to howl or lament at sunrise. No amount of sadness, it seems to me, can account for that; while, of course, a little religious belief would. Then, as to the Khasias, the testimony of Dr Hooker is again misrepresented precisely as in the case of the Lepchas, while nothing is adduced to disprove that of Colonel Yule. The Khasias recognise the existence of a Supreme Being, although they only worship the inferior spirits, who are supposed to inhabit the mountains, glens, and heaths. They offer libations to the gods before drinking. "Breaking hens' eggs" is their method of taking auguries—and perhaps one not more ridiculous than those practised by the ancient Greeks and Romans.[1]

[1] See Appendix XXXI.

I have now laid before you the evidence which Sir John Lubbock has been able to bring forward in support of the position that there are many peoples and tribes wholly destitute of religion. He has shown more industry in the collection of facts favourable to the conclusion which he draws than any other ethnologist or anthropologist, so far as I know, and for his industry he certainly deserves commendation; but it is impossible to credit him with having carefully and critically ascertained what are to be regarded as facts and what not. I do not charge him with having allowed any theological prepossessions to bias his judgments as to the facts. I gladly acknowledge that he displays nothing of the utterly unscientific and anti-religious bitterness which characterises what some have written on this subject. I look at his proposition and proof purely from an anthropological point of view, and I find that the proposition is not made out, that the proof is wholly unsatisfactory—for the so-called facts which constitute the proof are not really facts. But "how," he asks, "can a people who are unable to count their own fingers, possibly raise their minds so far as to admit even the rudiments of a religion?" I answer, first, by asking, Is it then quite certain that there are peoples unable to count their own fingers? I know that the statement has become a commonplace among anthropologists, but I do

not find that there is much evidence produced for it. The Australians, according to Sir John Lubbock, cannot count above three, and have no word for any higher number. Yet one of his own vocabularies shows how they count far above three. Thus *tres*, their word for three, thrice repeated is nine, which shows that these Australians can not only count above three but can count by multiplying threes. The evidence on which anthropologists have concluded that the Australians cannot count above three would prove that Englishmen cannot count thirteen and upwards, since thirteen, fourteen, &c., are only three and ten, four and ten, &c., put together. But, further, whether the Australians can or can not count their own fingers, it is certain that they have the rudiments of a religion; and we are bound to accept what is fact whether we can account for it or not, whether we can reconcile it with some other fact or not.

I do not venture to maintain that there are no tribes, no peoples, wholly destitute of religion, wholly without any sense of dependence on invisible powers. It may be that there are. I only say that, so far as I can judge, it has not been made out that there is any such tribe, any such people; and the examination of Sir John Lubbock's instances, far from leading me to his conclusion, leaves me with the conviction that, if

there be any such peoples they must be very few indeed.

But I must not overlook that an attack on the universality of religion, or at least on the universality of belief in a God, has been made from another side. The very marvellous system of thought called Buddhism, which originated in India about five hundred years before the advent of Christ, has spread over a greater area of the earth, and gained more adherents than even Christianity, and by peaceful means—by the power of persuasion—not by force of arms, not by persecution. Disregarding all distinctions of class, nation, and race, and enforcing no social laws or theories, but concentrating its whole energy on showing the way to eternal deliverance from evil, it has propagated itself in a much more remarkable manner than Mohammedanism. Although driven out of India—Nepaul excepted—after having flourished there for centuries, its devoted missionaries have spread it over Ceylon and Burmah, China and Japan, Tartary and Thibet. But Buddhism, we are told, is a system of atheism; and the three hundred millions of people by whom it is embraced, ignore in the most absolute manner the notion not only of a future state but of a deity. "There is not the slightest trace of a belief in God in all Buddhism," says M. Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire; and many others speak as strongly.

A very little examination, however, shows that such statements are stronger than they ought to be, and that they cannot but mislead unless they are explained and limited. In this religion which is characterised as atheistic, gods are represented as appearing on numerous occasions. In the legend of Buddha the gods of the Hindu pantheon are familiar personages, and never is a shadow of doubt thrown on their existence. "It is not enough to say," writes Saint-Hilaire, "that Buddha does not believe in God. He ignores Him in such a complete manner, that he does not even care about denying His existence; he does not care about trying to abolish Him; he neither mentions such a being in order to explain the origin or the anterior existence of man and his present life, nor for the purpose of conjecturing his future state and his eventual freedom. Buddha has no acquaintance whatsoever with God, and, quite given up to his own heroic sorrows and sympathies, he has never cast his eyes so far or so high." Now, if by God be meant the true God, this is what no one will either deny or be surprised at; but every account of Buddhism, M. Saint-Hilaire's included, and all the literature of Buddhism yet made known to the European world, agree in showing that Buddha has always been supposed by the millions of his followers to have been familiar with gods, and heavens, and hells, innumerable. You will not

read long in almost any Buddhist book without meeting with gods. The Lalitavistara introduces us to Buddha before his incarnation. "The scene is laid in heaven. Surrounded and adored by those that are adored, the future Buddha announces that the time has come for him to assume a mortal body, and recalls to the assembled gods the precepts of the law. When in the bosom of his mother Mâyâ Devi he receives the homage of Brahma, of Çakra the master of the gods, of the four kings of the inferior gods, of the four goddesses, and of a multitude of deities. When he enters into the world the divine child is received by Indra the king of the gods, and Brahma the lord of creatures. When arrived at manhood, and hesitating to break the bonds which attached him to the world, it is the god Hridéra—the god of modesty—who encourages him and reminds him that the hour of his mission has come. Before he can become Buddha he has to be tempted by Mara, the god of the love of sin and of death, and to struggle against the hosts of hell commanded by their chief." And so on, and so on. Everywhere gods, even in what M. Saint-Hilaire himself regards as one of the most ancient and authentic records of primitive Buddhism. But all these legends, he says, are "extravagances." Well, there is no doubt about that, but they are extravagances of religious belief. And the very absurdity and

naïveté of them testifies to the energy of the belief. In spite of its absurdities, and by its very absurdities even, the Buddhistic legend testifies that Buddhists believe in gods. But an atheism which includes a belief in gods is an atheism of a very strange kind, or rather a system which everywhere avows the existence and action of gods is not usually, and can only very improperly be, called atheism.

But, it will be said, Brahma, Indra, and all the other deities recognised in Buddhism, will disappear with the universe itself. They are not regarded as truly gods, because they are not regarded as eternal. They have come out of nothingness and will go back to nothingness. Now observe that if we are to reason in this way, if we are to call every system atheistic which implies atheism, we must come to the conclusion that there is no religion in the world except where a consistent theism prevails; that all forms of polytheism and of pantheism are simply varieties of atheism. For polytheism and pantheism are both essentially self-contradictory, and must logically pass over either into atheism or theism. There is no consistent, independent, middle term between these two. What is not the one, ought, logically considered, to be the other.

All the Greek gods and goddesses were believed by their worshippers to have been born, or, at least,

to have had an origin; there was admitted to have been a time when they were not, and it was felt that there might be a time when they would not be. Whence had they come? Their worshippers did not clearly put and resolutely face the question, but the question existed, and it could only be answered in an atheistic or in a theistic manner. If they came out of nothing, or were the products of chance, or the effects of eternal matter and its inherent powers, then what underlay this polytheism was atheism. If, on the other hand, these gods were the creatures of a self-existent, eternal Mind, what underlay the polytheism was theism. But if theism had been clearly apprehended it would have been seen at once that there was no evidence for the polytheism at all; that it was a system of fictions and fancies which dishonoured the one all-sufficient God. And what is true in this respect of Greek polytheism is true of all polytheism. In so far as it falls short of theism it involves atheism. It is not, however, on this account to be called atheism. It is to be described as what it is, not as what it involves.

Then, all pantheism involves atheism. An impersonal reason, an impersonal God, is not, if you insist on self-consistency, on logical definiteness and thoroughness, a reason, a god at all. A reason which is unconscious and which belongs to no one subject, a God who has no existence in himself,

who has no proper self, is not logically distinguishable from what is not reason, from what is not God. But in describing a system we have no right to represent it as being what we hold it ought logically to have been. Pantheism may, like polytheism, be logically bound either to rise to theism or to sink to atheism, but it is, for all that, neither theism nor atheism.

Hence I maintain that although Buddhism should be logically resolvable into atheism, although its fundamental principles should be shown logically to involve atheism, Buddhists are not to be described as atheists. Even millions of men may stultify themselves and accept a creed the fundamental principles of which involve monstrous consequences which few, if any, of its adherents deduce from them. It is clear and certain that the adherents of Buddhism are, as a rule, not atheists in any sense which shows that the human heart can dispense with belief in Divine agency. Their Buddhism does not prevent their believing in many gods, and this at once puts them on a level with polytheists. Besides, Buddha is regarded by them as a god. When Saint-Hilaire denies that they have deified Buddha, he maintains a position which is contradicted by every Buddhist writing and by every Buddhist believer in the world, unless he means that they have not invested him with all the attributes of the true

God, which is what no one, of course, ever thought of asserting that they had done. It is incontestable, indeed, that they suppose Buddha to have been once, or rather to have been often, a man, and even to have been a rat, a frog, a crow, a hare, and many other creatures; but it is as incontestable that they suppose him not only to have been four times Mahu-Brahma, the supreme god of the Hindus, but in becoming Buddha, to have raised himself higher than the highest gods, and to have attained omnipotence, omniscience, and other divine attributes. We cannot say that they do not believe him to have been a god because they believe him to have been born, while we admit that the Greeks believed Jupiter to have been a god, although they also believed him to have been born; we cannot say that they did not believe him to have been a god, because they believe him to have gone into Nirvana, even granting Nirvana to be non-existence, while we admit that the ancient Germans believed Odin to be a god, although they also believed that he would be devoured by the wolf Fenris.

An impartial examination of the relevant facts, it appears to me, shows that religion is virtually universal. The world has been so framed, and the mind so constituted, that man, even in his lowest estate, and over all the world, gives evidence of possessing religious perceptions and emotions.

However beclouded with ignorance, sensuousness, and passion his nature may be, certain rays from a higher world reach his soul. However degraded and perverted it may be, there remains a something within it which the material and the sensuous cannot satisfy, and which testifies that God is the true home of the Spirit.[1]

[1] See Appendix XXXII.

LECTURE VIII.

PESSIMISM.

IN the concluding portion of last lecture I argued that the millions of persons who profess the doctrine of Buddha were not to be summarily described as atheists and denied to have any religious beliefs or aspirations. I did not, however, argue that Buddhism was not logically resolvable into atheism, or maintain that it did not very distinctly involve atheism. In all heathen religions there are atheistical tendencies. In every form of pantheism and of polytheism unbelief is interwoven with faith. But there is probably no religion which comes so near atheism, or which to the same extent involves atheism, as Buddhism. It originated in the essentially atheistical conviction that the existence of the universe is an illusion, and the existence of sentient and rational beings an incalculable evil,—in the settled contempt for nature and life, which was

the logical outcome of Brahminical pantheism, and a result at which all Hindu philosophy arrived. The atheism and the pessimism which came to light in Buddhism were latent in Brahminism from the first, and became prominent and conspicuous in various forms in the course of its development. Instead of looking at the phenomena of the world, history, and mind, as manifestations of the power, wisdom, and goodness of an infinite Creator and Father, who by means of them discloses Himself to his children, and educates and disciplines them for a good and gracious issue, the thinkers of India, even when pronouncing these phenomena to be intimately connected with the substance of Divinity, the sole existence, irreligiously viewed them as mischievous mockeries, fitted only to deceive and enslave all that was noble in human nature. The atheism and pessimism of Buddhism were the ripened fruits of that root of bitterness.

In quite recent times a system very similar to Buddhism has appeared in Germany, and been advocated by Schopenhauer, Von Hartmann, and numerous other writers. Like Buddhism, it has sprung from a scepticism which was itself the product of pantheism. It is the atheism of pantheism evolved into a rival doctrine. It has already been presented to the German people in various forms, and has acquired a somewhat startling popularity among them. There can be no doubt that many

who do not accept it in its entirety largely sympathise with its dogmas as to life, death, and eternity. In all probability it will obtain, before long, literary representatives in this country, who, while finding perhaps few to adopt the fantastic metaphysics of its founders, may be easily able widely to diffuse some of its falsest principles and dreariest conclusions. I entertain not the least hope that it will soon entirely disappear. Those who regard it as a merely transient and superficial fashion of thought, as a touch or shade of speculative disease which will speedily vanish away, cannot perceive what is, however, manifestly the truth, that, with all its defects, it has the great merit of distinctly raising a question of enormous importance, which has been strangely overlooked even by philosophy; and further, that it is neither an inconsistent nor an unreasonable answer to that question, certain widely prevalent principles being presupposed.

The question to which I refer is, What is the worth of life? It is a question which few healthy and busy practical men, especially if moderately successful, ever ask, even in its immediate personal application to their own ambitions and enterprises. It generally needs disappointment, sickness, or grief to raise even momentarily the suspicion that human life may be but a vanity, and its schemes only shadows; and the vast majority of those on

whom this suspicion is forced, strive to get rid of it as quickly as they can. In natures with a thirst for happiness too deep to be quenched in the shallow waters of experience, or with a keen perception of the law of good, and an equally keen consciousness of a law in the members warring against it and bringing it into subjection, disappointment with this life, if not counteracted by faith in one which is better, may settle into the conviction that the world is but

> "One desert,
> Barren and cold, on which the wild waves break,
> But nothing rests, save carcasses and wrecks,
> Rocks, and the salt-surf weeds of bitterness."

In times when society is disorganised, when old faiths and old ideals have lost their charm and power, when culture is widely spread, but corruption is still more diffused, a feeling of life's nothingness may be profound and prevalent, and may express itself in many forms. And, in fact, a vein of pessimism may be traced almost throughout history. Its throbs may be heard in the sad refrains of many a poet—as, for instance, within the present century, in those of a Byron in England, a Heine and Lenau in Germany, a Musset and Ackermann in France, a Leopardi in Italy, and a Campoamor in Spain.

It was reserved, however, for the modern pessimist philosophers of Germany distinctly to recognise that

the question as to the worth of human life deserved to be regarded as one of the chief problems of thought. It was reserved for them also to present as a reasoned and even demonstrated answer to it, what had previously only been uttered as a cry of agony or weariness, that life was worth less than nothing,—that non-existence was better than existence. Although all the philosophers of ancient Greece and Rome had sought to ascertain the end of life, they all tacitly agreed to identify it with the good. None who came after them until Schopenhauer appeared, ventured directly and explicitly to deny the truth of that assumption. But such a denial was indispensably needed in order to dispel the dogmatic slumber which weighed on the human mind as to this matter. And the denial came. Pessimism, like Macbeth, has murdered sleep. Henceforth no man who cultivates philosophy, and especially no man who cultivates moral philosophy, can remain ignorant that the question, What is the worth of life? demands from him as much serious consideration as the question, Is man a free or a necessitated agent? or as the question, What is the foundation of virtue? Nor can the awakening stop here; but from the philosophical consciousness it must descend to the common consciousness, and must spread until all intelligent and educated men are brought to feel that the theme is one on which they are bound to meditate. In this I see an

ample providential justification of pessimism. It has its mission; and now that it is here, it will not pass away until that mission is accomplished—which will not be, so long as atheistical principles are prevalent. It can only be overcome through the repression and refutation of atheism. If the present life be all; if there be no God and no immortality; if nothing have value except what can be empirically measured and weighed,—it may be possible to prove that such assertions as that consciousness is necessarily and essentially pain; that misery is always in excess of happiness; that the course of things is only from bad to worse, &c.,—are exaggerations; but not, I think, to disprove that what good there is in life is so mingled with sin, suffering, and delusion, that a wise man may reasonably and deliberately wish that he had never been born. More than this pessimism is not logically bound to maintain; and this it may successfully maintain against all who agree with it in the acceptance of atheistical principles. Of course, this is of itself, in my opinion, a very good reason for not accepting atheistical principles without the most careful consideration.

It is impossible for me, within the limits at my disposal, to describe and examine the various systems of pessimism separately. I shall therefore group them together, and endeavour to give a certain unity and interest to my treatment of them

by comparing, on a few fundamental points, the doctrines of Schopenhauer and Hartmann with that of Buddha. The sole purpose in view, it must be kept in mind, is to determine whether the pessimistic conceptions of the world, life, death, and eternity, are such that we ought to abandon for them our theism, or such as should lead us to value it more.

The chief difference between oriental Buddhism and German pessimism is the obvious one, that the former is inseparable from faith in a legendary person, while the latter consists of a series or collection of merely abstract systems. Buddhism cannot be dissociated from Buddha; pessimism has no necessary connection with Schopenhauer, or Hartmann, or any other person. The founder of Buddhism was Siddharta, also designated Gotama, Sakyamuni, and especially Buddha—*i. e.*, the "enlightened." He belonged to the royal race of the Sakyas, who lived in northern India, in the district called Oude. Legend mentions Kapilavastu as his birthplace. The age in which he lived is so far from determined, that while some fix 543 B.C. as the year of his death, others prefer 368 B.C.; and every new inquirer into the subject seems to come to a new result. Buddha renounced his princely rank for the ascetic state; convinced himself of the unsatisfactoriness of Brahminism; taught the fundamental principles of the creed now associated

with his name; and by the persuasiveness of his speech, the benevolence and attractiveness of his disposition, and the truth, or apparent truth, of what he inculcated, gained numerous adherents. The legends which have been invented about him form of themselves an enormous literature; but what I have just said is, I believe, nearly all that we certainly know about him. So far as I can judge, the attempts made to separate between fact and fiction in the legend of Buddha are almost as delusive as the attempts which used to be made to account for the attributes and actions assigned to Jupiter by the character and deeds of a ruler of Crete. While Buddha, however unlike Confucius or Mohammed, is almost entirely a mythical, and not an historical personage, the myth of Buddha is far more important in the system of Buddhism than the life of Confucius in the system of Confucianism, or of Mohammed in Mohammedanism. It is a peculiarity which Buddhism alone shares with Christianity, that it concentrates itself in a person. It presents an ideal. It embodies its teaching in an example. It gives an object for affection. This, there can be no doubt, is one of the main sources whch has enabled it, in spite of the withering nature of its dogmas, to spread so extensively, to root itself so deeply, and to retain its hold so tenaciously. For the character of the mythical Buddha, although in many respects wildly

extravagant, is invested with an undeniable moral grandeur and spiritual impressiveness. It exhibits in the most striking manner all the gentler virtues. It is simply amazing how far on this side it transcends the Platonic, Aristotelian, Stoic, and Epicurean ideals of the sage, and how mean and superficial even it causes the boasted wisdom of the classical world to appear. Among its features are a love without limits, self-sacrifice, justice, purity. Buddha is represented as freely enduring the severest afflictions, and freely foregoing for ages final beatitude in order to work out the salvation of others. He announced his law as a law of good news to all. He preached his gospel to the poor no less than to the rich, to the Soudra as unreservedly as to the Brahmin. He took to his heart all living creatures. He enjoined a charity which was not limited by race, caste, religion, or anything else. He counselled all to live a virtuous life, gentle and prudent, lowly and teachable, resolute and diligent, unshaken in misfortune, uninfluenced by partiality, wrath, folly, or fear, faithful in the discharge of the relative duties, and actively benevolent; and to all who thus live, whatever be their station, circumstances, or creed, he promised victory over this world, and, if not Nirvana, rebirth in heavenly mansions. Hence, doubtless, it is that he has gained so many hearts, and drawn from them, as it were, the confession of the young

householder Sighala, "It is wonderful, master! it is wonderful! 'Tis as if one should set up again that which is overthrown, or should reveal that which is hidden, or should direct the wanderer into the right path, or hold out a lamp in the darkness, —so that they that have eyes to see shall see. Yea, even thus has the blessed Lord made known the truth to me in many a figure. And I, even I, do put my trust in thee, and in thy law, and in thy church. Receive me, Lord, as thy disciple and true believer from this time forth, as long as life endures."

The modern German philosophers who accept the Buddhist theory of existence and life as substantially the true one, to which Christianity and every other form of theism must give place, do not ask us, of course, to accept any legend or myth like that of Buddha. They only seek for assent to the fundamental doctrines of an essentially Buddhistic creed. They set forth a modified Buddhism without Buddha, and thus strike off a multitude of extravagances which European minds could never be expected to entertain. If they thus, however, relieve the system from a heavy burden, they also deprive it of its chief source of strength and vitality. Buddhism without Buddha—Buddhism reduced to a merely atheistic and pessimistic theory—would be a wretched substitute even for Buddhism in its integrity. It is impossible to imagine what virtues

it could either elicit or sustain. It may spread, but only in a sceptical and cynical age. It can no more reasonably be expected to call forth enthusiasm for the true, the beautiful, and the good, than snow and ice can reasonably be expected to kindle a conflagration and set the world on fire. Its diffusion through a society can only mean that vital power is ebbing from it, and the chill of death creeping over it. Life cannot be sustained on the doctrine that there is nothing worth living for. Modern pessimism is merely this doctrine elaborately developed. Buddhism is this also, but it is a great deal more; and in what it is more, lies chiefly the reason why it has exerted in many respects a beneficial influence.

I might proceed to indicate a number of differences between Buddhism and German pessimism, which arise from the ancient and Asiatic origin of the former and the modern and European origin of the latter; but as time forbids, and this is not a philosophical essay, but a lecture with a practical purpose in view, I hasten to say that Buddhism and the recent forms of pessimism are substantially agreed as to the nature and worth of existence. Buddhism has the merit of possessing a perfectly definite aim. It professes to show men how they may be delivered from evil. But what is evil? Evil, according to Buddhism, is of the very essence of existence. Wherever existence is there is evil.

It is not man only, but all sentient beings, which have been made to mourn ; it is not this world only which is a vale of tears, but all other worlds are also vain and doomed to misery. Buddha looks through the whole universe ; at every insect, every creeping thing, the fish of the sea, the fowl of the air, and the beast of the field ; at man, in all stages from birth to death, and in all conditions from the monarch to the mendicant; at the generations which have passed away, and at those which are to come ; at the worlds above and the worlds below, and at the innumerable intelligences which inhabit them,—and he sees that nowhere is there any true peace or secure happiness. Wherever the stream of existence flows—yea, even when it is through the lives of the highest gods—there unreality and uncertainty are to be found, and sorrow is to be feared. Christianity rests on the belief that God made all things very good, and that the evil in the world is due to sin,—to the perversity of the creaturely will. Buddhism, on the contrary, rests on the belief that all things are very bad ; that existence is in itself evil ; and that sin is only one of the necessary consequences of existence. It does not deny that there are pleasures, but it maintains that they are so rooted in delusion, and so surely followed by pains, that a wise man must desire not to be captivated by them. It admits that there are many seeming good things in life,

but holds that they are all merely seemingly good. It recognises that there are in every order of existences and actions some relatively good, but not that any are absolutely good. Many things are better than other things, but the best of all is not to be at all. Parinibbana—complete extinction—is the highest good.

Schopenhauer, Hartmann, and their followers, endorse the Buddhist view. The former, indeed, draws a still darker picture. He falls into exaggerations from which Buddha and his followers kept themselves free, and which are not necessarily implied in the pessimistic theory of existence. The world, according to him, is the worst possible. Had it been worse it would not have been able to exist at all. Had man been made only a little more wretched—had a small amount of deceitful pleasure not been poured into his cup—he would have refused to endure life. Things would thus have been better if they had been worse, seeing that humanity would then have taken its fate into its own hands and put an end to itself. Life is necessarily and hopelessly wretched. To live is to desire, to desire is to want, to want is to suffer, and hence to live is to suffer. No man is happy except when drunk or deluded; his happiness is only like that of a beggar who dreams that he is a king. Nothing is worth the trouble which it costs us. Wretchedness always outweighs felicity. The his-

tory of man is a long, confused, and painful dream. The notion of any plan or progress in it is erroneous. He who has read one chapter of it has read all. It is a tiresome repetition of horrors and follies which are ever essentially alike, however they may differ in accidentals. In a word, Schopenhauer has put forth all his power as a writer—and he was a vigorous and striking writer—to depict life as utterly worthless and wretched.

Von Hartmann is rather more cautious. He will not say that the world is the worst possible; he will not deny even that it may be the best possible, since we do not know what is possible; but he holds decidedly that it is worse than would have been no world at all. He does not, like Schopenhauer, represent pleasure as merely negative and pain as alone positive, as the very ground and essence of life, but he fully accepts as true the well-known words of Sophocles, "Not to have been born at all is the happiest fate, and the next best is to die young;" and those of Byron—

> "Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen,
> Count o'er thy days from anguish free;
> And know, whatever thou hast been,
> 'Tis something better—not to be."

He believes himself able to prove, by an appeal to the experience both of individuals and of society, that pain preponderates in a high degree over pleasure, evil over good. He does not deny that

there is a kind of progress and plan in history, and yet he regards history as, on the whole, an irrational process, the successive epochs of which are so many stages of illusion. In the first of these stages,—that which is represented by childhood in the development of the individual, and antiquity in the development of the race,—man hopes to be able to find happiness in this world, in the pleasures and pursuits and honours of the earthly life; but this hope is at length found out to be deceptive. The soul learns the vanity of the earthly life and earthly things; learns that there is no rest or satisfaction for it in them. With Christianity a new stage of history, corresponding to adolescence in the individual, is entered on. Disappointed with this world, man looks for another and seeks to lay up for himself treasure in heaven. What he knows he cannot find in the present life he hopes may await him in a future life. But as the thoughts of men are widened, and as criticism, science, and speculation spread, that hope likewise is seen to have no rational warrant, and the individual is forced to acknowledge that he has nothing worth living for either in the present or the future. Hope, however, dies hard in the human breast. Hence when men no longer dare to look for anything for themselves as individuals, they still believe in a collective progress of their race. This is their hope in the age in which we live,—

the manhood of humanity, the third stage of the world's history; but it also is an illusion. Wealth may be increased, mechanical inventions multiplied, and culture more widely diffused, but morality varies little, and the development of intellect diminishes happiness. The political changes which socialists demand will inevitably be realised, but those who suppose that men will be any the better when these changes have been effected will certainly be disappointed. The progress of history is not the growth of any positive good in history, but the growth of man's consciousness of the nothingness and vanity of human life.

The mere statement of views like those just indicated should be sufficient to render the believer in a God of wisdom and of love profoundly grateful that his faith saves him from assenting to dogmas so false and so terrible. It is only through the possession of a well-grounded faith in the perfections of God that we can be warranted in entertaining a cheerful view of the destinies of mankind. To be "without God" is, in the estimate of reason, equivalent to being "without hope in the world." This does not imply, however, that grave exaggerations may not be detected in the reasonings and calculations on which Schopenhauer and Hartmann have based their conclusions. On the contrary, the most manifest exaggerations abound. The pessimists are plainly not impartial

seekers after truth, but the zealous pleaders of a special cause; they are good advocates and bad judges; they make more than is warranted of whatever seems to be in favour of the view which they have espoused, and they depreciate or distort whatever appears to be inconsistent with it.

The main reason which Schopenhauer alleges in proof of the essential wretchedness of life is a badly executed psychological analysis—one vitiated by a metaphysical hypothesis. The principle that pleasure is merely negative, and that pain alone is positive, is derived by him from the more general principle that all is will—that the essence of all things is an effort, a striving, identical with that which, when manifested in ourselves under the light of consciousness, is called will. But all effort, he holds, springs from want, which is pain so long as unsatisfied, and which is no sooner satisfied than a new want, a new pain, is engendered. Willing is essentially suffering, and therefore life as essentially willing is essentially suffering. The more elevated the being, the fuller the life, the more the suffering. The lowest animals suffer least. The man of genius is of all men the most miserable. Pleasures are only the momentary alleviations of pain; happiness is but an evanescent illusion.

There is manifest error and morbid exaggeration in such a view as this. Life implies desire, and desire in a derivative being implies want, but

if the want is always supplied there need be little or no suffering. The prospect of enjoyment, not the experience of suffering, may be, and in many cases is, the stimulus to activity. Where feelings of unrest and disquiet are the causes or occasions of exertion, there may be in the exertion and in the result attained by it far more pleasure than pain. It is pleasure which springs from the fulfilment of the natural conditions of life ; it is pain which flows from their non-fulfilment ; and hence, as a general rule, happiness doubtless preponderates over misery in the animal world. All that can be legitimately inferred from the mere existence of want, is that the being which is conscious of want is a dependent being. Pain is not inherent in want, but is the consequence of want unsupplied. A consciousness of want is the root of all spiritual strength and perfection. The life of complete human blessedness is a life which is realised not to be inherent in self, but to flow from an infinite source for the continuous supply of every want. Want easily passes into pain, but in itself it is simply an expression of finiteness, of limitation. All sufferings which are needed to bring men to a sense of their wants are amply justified, because what they lead to is not evil, but a something purely good, if there be an adequate and appropriate supply of these wants.

Then the stages of illusion described by Hart-

mann are mainly illusions of his own. Even in antiquity,—in the Greco-Roman world,—it was only the foolish who hoped to find happiness in the pleasures and pursuits and honours of earthly life; and the foolish hope so still. The majority of men, and especially of thoughtful men, in Greece and Rome, never cherished any illusion of the kind. It is possible for men, even in the savage state, to see the stupidity of such a hope; while atheist philosophers, even in the nineteenth century, are apt to believe in its reasonableness, because they have no other hope. On the other hand, that hope in a future life is an illusion—that wise men have discovered it to be without solid foundation,—is an assertion which atheists have made ever since atheism existed, but which is as unproved at present as on the first day it was uttered. As to faith in human progress, it is obviously not only reconcilable with faith in God and immortality, but more dependent on it than on anything else. Faith in God is the chief support and source of faith in progess. If the former be rejected the latter will not long be retained. In a word, Von Hartmann's conception of the course of history is very superficial and erroneous—one devised to serve the requirements of his general theory of existence, with extremely little regard to the really relevant facts.

It is easy to show that Hartmann has under-

valued what are generally regarded as the advantages of life, and exaggerated what seem to be its disadvantages. Yet it is not easy, or even possible, satisfactorily to refute his fundamental thesis by data drawn entirely from the pleasures and pains of common experience in the present life. Experience is a very ambiguous term. It may mean merely our perceptions and sensations; it may mean these and all other states of immediate consciousness; it may be so widened as to include, besides, all that can be established by induction; and it may signify all that we perceive, feel, and can prove in any valid way. In its narrower significations it is an inadequate basis on which to pronounce general judgments; if its third application is legitimate, so is its fourth; and in that its widest meaning, experience is coextensive with knowledge, in which case God and a future life will be contended to be objects of experience. Then the present life is extremely uncertain and variable, both as regards quantity and quality. It may be a thing of mere moments or of many years, and may have the most diverse sorts of fortunes. What is the worth of a life of a few hours of suffering, or of a few years of sickliness and disease? There are tens and hundreds of thousands of such lives. A man may live long in health and prosperity, but there may be before him a few years of agony and wretchedness

When he is dead, how will you weign the many years of moderate pleasure which he has enjoyed against the few years of severe pain which he has suffered, so as to decide which scale has been the heavier? Can you, judging by mere pleasures and pains, reasonably pronounce any man happy before he is dead? Further, what the pessimist means by the present life is only a fragment of the present life of religious men. The world of duty and of spiritual communion is as real to them *now* as the world of sense. The pains and pleasures which the atheist regards as the sole and ultimate elements of calculation, seem to them facts which can only be judged of aright when viewed in relation to facts of greater importance. How can we estimate the worth of life by considering exclusively the mere fragment of a fragment of it? If there be a moral life as well as a physical life—if the moral life be higher than the physical life instead of subordinate to it—if there be a God—and if immortality be a reality,—the reasoning of the pessimist is, indeed, plainly erroneous, but not more so than the endeavour to refute it by arguing on the supposition that there is no independent moral life, no God, and no eternal state of being. The pessimist view of existence can only be met by a religious view of existence.

Mr Sully, the author of a very able work on

the subject under consideration, argues for the contrary opinion. He urges as his first reason that "it is by no means agreed among men that experience does guarantee the truth either of a future life or of the existence of a benevolent Creator,"—that "many persons very distinctly reject the evidences of natural theology." To this objection it is a sufficient reply that the question is not as to what is agreed among men, but as to what is true. Far more persons very distinctly reject the philosophical principles assumed in Mr Sully's argumentation than the belief in God and a future life. His second and principal reason is, that "the worth of human life, so far from being made dependent on theological conceptions, is itself one of the facts on which the propositions of theology have to establish themselves, or to which at least they have to accommodate themselves;" that "the truth of the existence of a benevolent Creator is directly affected by the pessimist reading of human life;" and that "the belief in a future life must be affected so far as the assurance of a wise and good God on which it reposes is affected." It is an argument which proves just the opposite of what it is supposed by Mr Sully to do. Certainly, if the pessimist reading of life be correct the theistic view of it must be erroneous. Does it follow that theism ought to take no account of pessimism, and of what it

alleges to be facts which substantiate its account of the worth of life? Manifestly not. The plain duty of the theist is just the reverse; it is to examine all the facts brought forward by pessimism, to compare them with all the other facts on which itself rests, and to show that the true reading of human life, when it is surveyed in a sufficiently comprehensive way, is not pessimist but theistic. This is what theism does. I know of no facts brought forward by Schopenhauer or Hartmann which I have not taken into consideration in my argumentation for theism when estimating the objections which may be urged to the Divine wisdom, benevolence, and justice. I allow more weight even to these facts than Mr Sully seems inclined to do. Why is pessimism to be discussed in a way which would be utterly unreasonable in regard to theism? If theism is true, pessimism is false; if what theism alleges in its support are real facts, properly interpreted and derived from a far wider field of existence and knowledge than are those on which pessimism relies, pessimism must be an erroneous reading of life, necessarily resulting from the attempt to explain a text without regard to its context. How then can it be reasonable either for an advocate or critic of it to say, Let us have nothing to do with theism or theology? let us concern ourselves with nothing but the question, Is there an overplus of pleasure

or pain in life? The question as to the worth of life is one which cannot be so narrowed and isolated. It is essentially a question which belongs to the philosophy of final causes. The worth of life cannot be weighed in the false balances of the so-called Science of Hedonics.

What solution, we naturally ask, does Mr Sully give to the problem raised by pessimism, after having consented to deal with it in the narrow and partial manner which has been specified? This: there are in the world certain permanent conditions of happiness, such as wealth, family connections, agreeable occupations, self-culture, a due adjustment of the aims of life, the voluntary direction of our attention to what is pleasing rather than to what is painful, and the furtherance of others' interests so far as they are involved in the pursuit of our own happiness; if we thoughtfully and carefully seek satisfaction through the attainment of these things, we shall secure a clear surplus of enjoyment over misery; and we may comfort ourselves with the hope that the world is growing a more and more desirable place in which to live. It is an answer which one can conceive might become popular among the unreflecting members of English middle-class society, but which is not likely to be widely accepted by more competent judges. Surely experience has proved that happiness is not to be found in wealth, family connec-

tions, agreeable occupations, and the like. Surely it is certain that millions cannot gain more than daily bread for themselves and their families, even in the most disagreeable occupations. The self-culture which aims merely at happiness cannot fail to miss its aim, and will probably be as productive of evil as of good. To attend to what is pleasing rather than to what is painful is, as a general rule, a most immoral and mischievous maxim. We are all far too much inclined to get out of the way of sorrow; and what we really need to be told is, attend rather to what is painful than to what is pleasing. To further others' interests in the pursuit of our own happiness is a playing at virtue which can only lead the conscience to a consciousness of hypocrisy. We have no experience that the world will grow happier. Experience is only of the present and the past, not of the future; and the present and past afford merely data for vague conjectures as to whether happiness will increase or diminish in the future. There is, it seems to me, no probability that the world will grow a more and more desirable place to live in, if faith in God and the hope of immortality are gradually to decay until they ultimately die out of the human consciousness.

Mr Sully acknowledges that his answer is not one which will satisfy "the greed of human nature." He is quite right there. Yet that greed is a most

noteworthy fact of experience, and no answer which does not satisfy it is a solution of the problem as to the worth of life. There is nothing so insatiable as the human soul, and there is nothing which receives from this world so little satisfaction. There is a vast disproportion between the demands of the heart and the realities of experience. The soul is so ambitious, and the world is so easily exhausted, that they do not seem to have been made for each other. Our hearts are far too large for any worldly life; the worldly life could only satisfy far smaller hearts. But the heart can ill bear the perpetual contradiction between itself and life; to be always asking, and never receiving; to be incessantly agitated and incessantly disappointed. It longs for rest—for peace. And it has a choice between two ways which both lead to rest, but to rest of very different kinds. It may take the broad and beaten path which lies in lowering the heart to the level of worldly life; in compressing it until it is small enough; in restricting its desires to what experience shows earth will afford; in learning to ask little and to expect little. This is the way in which many seek and find rest; but it is the infallible mark of a low and vulgar philosophy to recommend or sanction a procedure which leads through the degradation of the whole nature to the rest of spiritual death. True wisdom counsels us to try the other, although narrower and more

arduous path; to seek an experience as elevated and rich as our highest instincts crave for; to be content only with a good which will really satisfy the greed of the heart; to make the rest not of stifled but of satisfied desire—not of death, but of life—our goal.

Pessimism, we are now prepared to expect, must rest on the most defective notion of God, or rather must be virtually without God, since not otherwise could it have taken so appalling a view of things.

The dogma which has been mentioned as an essential article of the creed of Sakyamuni,—the dogma that existence is inherently evil,—that existence, even in the highest intelligences of the celestial worlds, is evil,—leaves no room for any true belief in God. If existence be in every form and aspect evil, it cannot need Divine intelligence and goodness to account for existence; and if existence does not require a God to explain it, non-existence may explain itself. While, therefore, Buddhism readily embraces the gods of the various countries which it has overrun, it acknowledges no Supreme Creative and Governing Reason. It assumes that there is an eternal succession of worlds, and that human souls revolve perpetually in the urn of fate, disappearing and reappearing and passing through countless forms from a clod of earth to a god; but it does not ask how the series of worlds began, or whence souls originally

came. Like the positivism and agnosticism of modern Europe, it is content to regard the universe as a chain of secondary events, or a web of phenomena and relations, and treats all inquiries after the origin of things as vain and useless. While it knows of no First Cause, however, it affirms the existence of a mysterious law of causality conditioning the uninterrupted succession of causes and effects; and this law, which is what is called Karma, is of a moral as well as a physical nature. What determines the future is the aggregate result of past actions. The condition of each one to-day depends not only on what he has done since he was born, but equally on what he did myriads of years ago. There is thus, according to Buddhism, a sort of moral government in the universe, although there is no Moral Governor; at least, there is a very comprehensive and rigid moral fatalism. When a world is destroyed, as in the cycles of change every world must often be, and when not an atom of matter in it, or a soul which belongs to it, is left, good and bad works remain, with their eternal consequences, and give rise to a world and souls again.

Buddha is not the First Cause, not a God, not a God-man, but a man-God. The notion that man can attain by his own exertions divine attributes —can by prayers and sacrifices, and mental and bodily discipline, become a god, even in spite of

the opposition of the gods—is a very widely spread one in naturalistic and pantheistic religions. It was distinctly recognised in Brahminism; and from Brahminism Buddhism borrowed it, or, we may even say, Buddhism was based on this belief of Brahminism. Buddha is a man-God: a man who has risen to be higher than the highest of gods, because he resolved to do so, and through a course of millions of years, and hundreds of births and deaths, ever kept steadily before him the purpose that he would find the way by which the souls of men might escape from the miseries of their incessant wanderings from existence to existence.

When we turn from Buddha to Schopenhauer, the transition as regards the fundamental point before our attention at present is not very great. Schopenhauer could not endure theism. The way in which he tried to account for the universe without referring to God was as follows: The world of experience, he argues, is but our *representation;* or, in other words, the objects of our knowledge are the products of our intellects. There is no world of such objects existing outside of us, and corresponding to our representations. The known world is produced by the minds which know it, and has no existence except in these minds. It is a mere phenomenon of consciousness; it is a delusion—a dream. But beneath this unreal world there is—so Schopenhauer argued—a real one, which is con-

stituted by what he calls *will*. This will is said to realise itself in the various physical forces, and in the activities of vegetable and animal life, as well as in what are commonly termed wills. It is not accompanied or guided by intellect, but it precedes and creates intellect. This blind will—which is the will of no one—produces and pervades the whole world. It is the one reality from which are reflected all appearances. What Karma is in the creed of Buddha, Will is in the creed of Schopenhauer. It is his substitute for God. But if we ask, How is its existence to be known? he cannot tell us; and if he could, the telling us would be of no use, since, on his own showing, knowledge is delusion. If we ask him, What is this will which you say is alone real, the true and ultimate explanation of the universe? he has to reply,—"There is no possible answer to that question; for in so far as a thing is known, it is not real, but only a phenomenon." Thus what he says just amounts to this: "All that we know is delusion; and although what I call will is real, it is only real in so far as I know nothing about it." Such is the theory which he puts forth as much more profound, and self-consistent, and lucid than atheism.

Von Hartmann attempts to explain the universe by what he designates the Unconscious. He regards the Unconscious as comprehensive of an omnipotent will and an omniscient intelligence.

He represents both the primal will and the primal intelligence as unconscious; but as this is a mere negative predicate, and as he shows us neither how nor why they are united, he is manifestly from the outset, with all his pretensions to monism, an irrational dualist. The unconscious, he argues, creates and constitutes matter, which, according to his view, is only an arrangement of atomic forces that are themselves unconscious volitions which have for objects unconscious representations or ideas. It likewise originates and presides over the evolution of organisation and life, so that its operations may be traced in all biological and psychological processes, and in the general course of history. It attains to consciousness in man through the separation of intelligence from will. And the growth of intelligence consists in ever more clearly recognising the folly of the work of the will.

I do not need to occupy time in criticising fancies so arbitrary and self-contradictory as those which have just been described. The latest of them is as unreasonable as the earliest. Buddha's Karma or impersonal moral fate is in no respect a less satisfactory explanation of things than either Schopenhauer's will or Hartmann's unconsciousness. In one respect it is decidedly preferable; it is moral, it is not mere force. Karma, Will, the Unconscious,—all three, conceived of as substitutes for God, are pure myths. That the two last should

nave originated and found acceptance in a highly educated country, and in a scientific age, shows that something more is required than education and science to protect us from superstitions as gross as any that haunted the medieval mind.

Neither Schopenhauer nor Hartmann has ventured to adopt the cardinal doctrine of Asiatic Buddhism, the dogma of the man-God, of the development of man into God; but even this extravagant and hideous tenet has found a European advocate in M. Renan. He begins the book intitled 'Dialogues et Fragments Philosophiques,' published in 1876, by maintaining that two things are certain, —first, that neither nature nor history offers the least trace of the intervention of a will higher than the human, or, in other words, not the least trace of the existence or action of a God; and second, that, notwithstanding this, the world has an end and labours at a vast and mysterious work. He next proceeds to argue that it is probable that the work and end of the world are the evolution and organisation of God by reason. Thus, although there was no God at the beginning of the world, there will be one in process of time. God did not create the world, but the world is labouring to bring forth God. It is truly wonderful how far atheism and evolution together may carry the human imagination.

I remark, in the next place, that the systems

under consideration are very similar in the views which they present as to the way in which we are overpowered by evil. Buddhism although essentially atheistical, professes to be a religion which discloses salvation. It represents the attainment of salvation as dependent on a knowledge of the causes which account for existence. Existence is evil. The causes of existence are, therefore, the causes of evil. The immediate cause of existence is attachment. Attachment—a certain cleaving to existence—is what keeps us bound down to it; enslaved under the law of transmigration. Attachment, the cause of existence, is itself an effect, the cause of which is desire, the pursuit of what pleases, and aversion to what is disagreeable. Desire is, in its turn, the effect of sensation, through which we become aware of the qualities of things, and so are moved to seek or avoid them. Sensation is still no more than an effect. Its cause is contact; not necessarily physical contact, but contact either through the external senses or the internal sense. Contact is therefore, in its turn, consequent upon the six seats or centres of sensation, five of which are external, and one internal, this last comprehending all that we call sentiments,—all states of feeling which are not dependent upon any of our bodily organs, but arise from mental causes. The seats of sensation are, in like manner, referred to form, form to consciousness, consciousness to conception,

and conception to ignorance. Ignorance is the ultimate cause of this chain of twelve alternate causes and effects. It is described as consisting essentially in regarding what is evanescent as permanent, what is illusion as reality, or, in other words, in supposing anything that exists to be anything else than a mockery and an evil.

The theory of Schopenhauer is much the same. All phenomenal existence, according to him, is but a dream, and all individuality but a delusion. Life, though grounded in the essence of things and a result of necessity, is a mere vanity. It has its root in the will to live; it is a cleaving to existence, a striving after satisfaction; but striving springs from desire, desire from want, want from suffering, and all from delusion or ignorance. Were it not for ignorance of the worthlessness of life, there would be no will to live; there would be no life.

The teaching of Von Hartmann is at this point in agreement with that of Schopenhauer. It is to the working of the irrational will of the Unconscious that he ascribes alike the origin of existence and of evil. That will has broken away from the primitive harmony of the Unconscious, and nature and life are the deplorable consequences. Reason —unconscious reason—follows after to undo as far as possible the evil which will has produced, and to convince it of the mischief which it has caused, and

is causing; but before it succeeds, all history must be traversed, all delusions experienced, all follies committed. The new Buddhism is, in this connection, so far as I can see, neither more profound nor more reasonable than the old.

We pass on to consider what pessimism has to teach concerning the chief end or highest good of human life. In the Buddhism of Buddha the series of causes accounting for the continued flow of existence or evil is regarded as of extreme importance. The nature of the salvation must correspond to the nature of the evil, and the method in which the salvation is to be attained must correspond to the causes of what makes it necessary. Hence it is perfectly natural that the discovery of the order and connection of the causes enumerated should seem to the Buddhist to have solved the enigma, to have dispelled the mystery, of the universe. The nature of the evil must, as I have said, determine the nature of the salvation. Now the evil is existence. It is existence in itself—existence in every form and aspect it can assume. This would lead us to infer that the salvation must be the opposite of existence,—must be non-existence, annihilation, complete extinction. And the surmise is too true. The reward which Buddhism holds forth to its votaries as the highest attainable, even by a Buddha, is perfect Nirvana—nothingness, the absolute void, the state in which nothing

remains of that which constitutes existence, the entire absence of sensation and self-consciousness. It is difficult to credit that men should have been able to form such a view of the chief good; and the European students of Buddhism have tried as much as they could to resist the conclusion that this was what it taught, but they have found it vain to resist the evidence any longer. With the exception, perhaps, of Max Müller, all the leading authorities on Buddhism are agreed that what it points to as the ultimate goal of a pious life is not merely a state of repose, of non-agitation, or a state of unconsciousness, as in sleep, but extinction, annihilation, nonentity. This conclusion cannot be affected by any discussion as to the meaning and application of the celebrated word Nirvana. It may be held as proved that the Nirvana on which the Buddhists lavish such superlative praises is, in their oldest writings almost always, and in their later writings very often, not annihilation, but a state of unruffled calm, of blissful freedom from anxiety, desire, sorrow, and sin. This, I think, has been nearly made out by Max Müller and Childers. But Nirvana is itself a state with stages. It may be complete or incomplete. He who enters into it is not at the end of his life. He is only sure that he will arrive there; that he will not be reborn. What is the very end? What is Parinirvana? There seems to be no doubt that the only answer

is — eternal and absolute nothingness. Were it otherwise, Buddhism would stand charged with the most manifest inconsistency. It knows no absolute god, no world-soul, no being into which the perfect man could enter or be absorbed; for every god, every soul, every being, is illusion and vanity. It distinctly condemns as a heresy the notion that man has any true self, any real individuality, or is more than a mere temporary aggregate of qualities. Buddhism, after having pronounced a sentence of condemnation against all existence, was compelled by force of logic to confound perfected salvation with complete extinction.

As to this point, however, we must be on our guard against certain exaggerations which are current. Some authors write as if the terrible negation in which Buddhism ends were one of the chief sources of its strength — as if the void abyss to which it points were full of attractions to the oriental mind—as if hundreds of millions of human beings were so strangely constituted as to hunger after absolute vacuity and thirst for eternal death. There are no grounds for such a view. What the Buddhist laity hope for from obedience to the precepts of their faith is to be born again in some higher and purer state of being than that through which they are at present passing. The Nirvana which is eulogised in the Buddhist Scriptures, and after which the Buddhist saints are represented as

striving, is not the cessation of existence, but cessation from passion and change. All Buddhist thinkers are not orthodox and logical; and doubtless many of them are not nihilists. In the popular legends there are stories of Buddhas who have come back from Nirvana; and although this is in manifest contradiction to the Buddhist creed as a whole, it is a circumstance which ought to be noted, as showing that there is a popular Buddhism which is unconsciously in contradiction to Buddhism as a theory. "In China," we are told by Professor Martin of Pekin, "the Nirvana was found to be too subtle an idea for popular contemplation; and in order to furnish the people with a more attractive object of worship, the Buddhists brought forward a goddess of mercy, whose highest merit was, that having reached the verge of Nirvana, she declined to enter, preferring to remain where she could hear the cries and succour the calamities of those who were struggling with the manifold evils of a world of change." The human heart, we may be assured, is essentially the same all the world over.

The pessimist philosophers of Germany are very orthodox Buddhists, so far as regards the belief that annihilation is our being's end and aim. According to Schopenhauer, life will gradually be seen to be what it really is—an empty and illusive form. As this knowledge grows, the will to live

must gradually cease. Men will refuse to preserve themselves or propagate their species, and will welcome death as their highest good. Thus at length individuality, personal existence, will pass completely away, and life will be cancelled in the nothingness of eternity. The blunders of the creative power will thus be corrected and effaced. But Schopenhauer fails to give us any assurance that when this has been accomplished that power will not begin again to blunder as foolishly and mischievously as before. All that he seems sure of is that it cannot do any worse than it has done. His hope that it may do nothing at all is far from consistent with his general opinion of its character. So irrational an agent cannot be expected to act rationally. Von Hartmann maintains that after men have passed from deception to deception they will at length recognise the utter vanity of existence, sigh after eternal extinction, and seek and find it in a collective and concerted act of self-destruction. Reason, he teaches us, will ultimately convince the will that it is better for it not to be, and induce it to annihilate itself. He does not inform us, however, in what way it is possible for the universal will to annihilate itself. Is there any dynamite, asks Dr Ebrard, not irrelevantly, which will serve the purpose? Herr von Hartmann ought to know. He seems to suppose that the human race by annihilating itself can annihilate

the power which originated the universe; but can he seriously believe so manifest an absurdity?

Herr Bahnsen stands alone among pessimists in distinctly denying that even the poor hope of annihilation is legitimate. This vigorous thinker is the most thorough and uncompromising of all the advocates of pessimism. He maintains that the world and life are not only essentially irrational and wretched, but will be eternally so. He holds that his fellow-pessimists have no right to promise that the agony of creation will ever terminate. If his view be correct, the words which Dante read over the gate of hell might be inscribed on the portals of the universe—

"Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch' entrate."

That his view is not correct cannot, I believe, be proved on pessimistic principles. That evil will have an end, if existence is essentially evil, may be believed on the word of Buddha or Schopenhauer or Hartmann, but reason for believing it there can be none. The hope of the extinction of evil in a world essentially evil is an unreasonable hope, and can only be based on blind faith. But notwithstanding this, the latest Buddhists, with the one exception mentioned, like the earliest—those who live on the banks of the Spree and the Main, like those who live beside the Meinam and the Cambodia—look to "nothingness as an asylum

from which there is no return, and in which the soul has no longer anything to fear, nor anything to expect."

In conclusion, we would ask, What is the path which pessimism advises us to pursue in order to attain the goal which it sets before us? How are we to reach what it represents as our ultimate destination?

Buddhism finds an answer implied in its doctrine of the series of causes of existence. To break the chain of causes is what is required. This can only be done through discovering the worthlessness of existence, and ceasing from all attachment, all sensuous cleaving, to it in any form. To secure detachment from life, a code of morality is the first thing enjoined. Buddhism is predominantly an ethical doctrine. And it is as such that it is chiefly entitled to praise. It does not fall within the scope of this lecture to dwell on the merits of its moral teaching, but I gladly recognise that they are very great, although not unaccompanied and uncounteracted by serious defects. No other heathen system is pervaded by so elevated and pure an ethical spirit. It shows the most wonderful appreciation of the beauties of such virtues as meekness, patience, forgiveness of injuries, compassion, and charity. It is inspired, like Christianity, with a sense of the glory of self-sacrifice. At first sight it almost seems as if the

morality which it preached were essentially evangelical. Yet this is by no means the case. For, as has been justly said, "if our earliest impression is the closeness of the parallel between the morality of Buddhism and the morality of the Cross, our second impression is the wideness of their contrast. In Christianity, self-sacrifice is divine; in Buddhism, it is purely human, and proposed as the substitute for a religion. In Christianity, self-sacrifice contemplates the amelioration of the world; in Buddhism, it contemplates getting out of the world. In Christianity, self-sacrifice is proclaimed to be the source of the highest ultimate joy; in Buddhism, it is offered as a means of suicide. . . . The morality of Buddhism, beautiful as it is in its outward precepts, is still the product of a root of bitterness, and owes its existence to the despair of all rest."[1] Then morality alone cannot lead, according to Buddhism, to Nirvana. It is a help towards freeing the soul from the thraldom of the causes of existence, but it is no more than a help. The direct path to Nirvana is meditation and asceticism. No one who does not traverse this path—no one who does not become a self-mortifying monk or recluse—can hope for more from his obedience to the moral law of Buddhism than to escape the hells and

[1] Matheson—'Growth of the Spirit of Christianity,' vol. i. pp. 28, 29.

to transmigrate into something better than he has been.

In entire accordance with this teaching, Schopenhauer maintains that the will to live must be rooted out by fasting, by voluntary poverty, by meek submission to injury, by absolute chastity, and, in a word, by the various exercises of asceticism. His practice did not in the least correspond to this part of his theory, as he was particularly careful of his life, health, and money, had a most exclusive and selfish regard to his own comfort, and was decidedly the reverse of either meek or patient. But his ethical creed was perfectly orthodox in the Buddhistic sense, although his life was heretical. Von Hartmann is much less orthodox even in creed. He admits that it is hopeless to expect men to mortify the flesh and destroy life by ascetic practices, and would have his followers live just as other people do, in the trust that the world, owing to the delusions and disenchantments of history, will gradually, without individuals taking any care about the matter, work out its own salvation—that is, its own destruction. In the East, multitudes of men have earnestly striven to act on their pessimism. In the West, no one has as yet, so far as I am aware, seriously tried to do so.

The theory which we have been considering answers successfully few, if any, of the demands of the reason, the conscience, or the heart. It re-

gards the world as irrational, and so, of course, does not explain it. It lays good and evil under the same condemnation. It seeks to empty the soul of the susceptibilities which it cannot satisfy, and to extirpate the desires which it cannot regulate. It tends to arrest all social progress. The rest which it promises is that of the grave. We ought, I think, to carry away from the contemplation of it a deepened gratitude to God for the gift of that Gospel which has shown us the true cause of the world's misery and the true way of salvation That even in our own day, and in Christian lands, the Gospel should by some have been deliberately rejected in the name of science and philosophy, and the Buddhist theory reproduced as a substitute for it, only shows in a glaring and terrible light that what is esteemed the most modern wisdom may be very ancient folly.[1]

[1] See Appendix XXXIII.

LECTURE IX.

HISTORY OF PANTHEISM.

PANTHEISM is a word of very wide and very vague import. It has been used to designate an immense variety of systems which have prevailed in the East and the West in ancient and modern times It is, in fact, a word so vague that few thinkers have defined it to their own satisfaction. There is no general agreement as to its meaning, and it has been applied to all sorts of doctrines, the worst and the best. It has been so understood as to include the lowest atheism and the highest theism—the materialism of Holbach and Büchner, and the spiritualism of St Paul and St John. There is a materialistic pantheism which cannot be rigidly separated from other materialism, and there has been much talk of late of a Christian pantheism which can only be distinguished from Christian theism if theism be identified, or rather confounded, with deism. The term pantheism ought, of course,

to be so understood, if possible, as to be altogether inapplicable to either atheistic or theistic systems; but we must remember that systems of thought, and especially systems of religion, are seldom, if ever, perfectly homogeneous and self-consistent. It is seldom, if ever, possible to refer them to a class with absolute accuracy, or to find that a definition exactly suits them. Even in regard to materialism, I had to remark that the only kind of system of which its history supplies no record is one which would answer truly to the name of materialism. In the same way there is probably no pure pantheism. The systems designated pantheistic are only more or less so; they contain likewise, in almost every instance, some atheistic, polytheistic, or theistic elements. It would be therefore unfair to judge any system solely and rigidly by a definition of pantheism. Each pantheistic system must be judged of in itself and as a whole in order to be impartially estimated. Why each system has come to be what it is, and why one system differs from another, are questions which the history of religious philosophy professes to answer, and which it is continually learning to answer in a more thorough and satisfactory manner, while the characteristic at once common to all the systems, and distinctive of them, is still not very clearly or exactly determined.

What is pantheism? The following is as definite

a general answer as I can give. Pantheism is the theory which regards all finite things as merely aspects, modifications, or parts of one eternal and self-existent being; which views all material objects, and all particular minds, as necessarily derived from a single infinite substance. The one absolute substance—the one all-comprehensive being—it calls God. Thus God, according to it, is all that is; and nothing is which is not essentially included in, or which has not been necessarily evolved out of, God. It may conceive of the one substance in many and most dissimilar ways, but it is only pantheism on condition of conceiving of it as one. For example, there can only be materialistic pantheism where there is believed to be materialistic monism. Its adherents are those who regard matter as ultimately not an aggregate of atoms but a unity,—who are so devoid of perspicacity as not to see that materialism and monism are in reality contradictory conceptions. Pantheism may also represent the derivation of the multiplicity of phenomena from the unity of substance as taking place in many very different ways, but it cannot be truly pantheism unless it represent it as a necessary derivation. It must regard it not as a freely willed production, but as an eternal process which could not have been other than what it has been. In order that there may be pantheism, monism and determinism must be combined. It is only then

that the All of Nature is believed to be coextensive with God—only then that the Divine Being is supposed to be fully or exhaustively expressed in the Divine manifestations.

According to the view I have just stated, no system which does not include determinism and exclude freedom is truly pantheistic. I refuse to have any controversy with certain so-called forms of pantheism which I do not regard as properly pantheistic, and which are certainly not anti-theistic. If matter could be resolved into force, and force could be reasonably inferred to be a phase or exertion of Divine power—if the laws of matter could be shown to be modes of God's agency, and the properties of matter modes of His manifestation—if Berkleyanism could be proved true,—some persons would say that, so far as the physical universe was concerned, pantheism had been established. I should say nothing of the kind, and should consider such an application of the term pantheism as not only unwarranted but injudicious, because unnecessarily provocative of religious prejudice. Physical nature is not represented by the view to which I refer as in the least degree more commensurate with the Divine power than by the common view. It may have been the free production of a volition, and may be an inexpressibly less adequate measure of the might of God, than a thought or word is of the power of man. It may

have left in God an infinite energy which He can direct and apply according to the good pleasure of His will. In like manner, if all human minds were proved to exist—as some have supposed them to do—through the conditions of intelligence called primary ideas; and if these primary ideas could be ascertained to be—what some hold that they are—thoughts of God, not only present in the mind of man, but constituting it what it is,—although Divine thought would thereby be represented as the substance, so to speak, of human minds, yet if a distinct individuality and real freedom could be justly attributed to these minds, pantheism in the strict and proper sense would not be established. The creature is so dependent on the Creator as to exist only in, through, and by Him. What amount of being it has in itself no man can tell. The quantity of being, the degree of being, possessed by the creature is certainly indeterminate. The finite cannot weigh itself in the balances of substance or being with the Infinite. It cannot ascertain what measure of being, what amount of substance, it has, as distinguished from the Infinite. Nor is it necessary that it should try to do so in order to preserve itself from pantheism and its errors. It will be sufficient for this purpose that it adhere to the plain testimony of consciousness and conscience, to the great facts of freedom and responsibility. In knowing ourselves as self-conscious and

self-acting with a certainty far greater than any reasoning to the contrary can produce, we have a guarantee that the pantheism which includes fatalism is false,—and there is, properly speaking, no other pantheism.

Pantheism is, as regards the relation of God to the world, the opposite extreme to what apologetic writers call deism. The latter theory represents God as a personal Being who exists only above and apart from the world, and the world as a something which, although created by God, is now independent of Him, and capable of sustaining and developing itself and performing its work, without His aid, in virtue of its own inherent energies. It not only distinguishes God from the world, but separates and excludes Him from the world. Pantheism, on the contrary, denies that God and nature either do or can exist apart. It regards God without nature as a cause without effect or a substance without qualities, and nature without God as an effect without a cause or qualities without a substance. It sees in the former an abstract conception of a power without efficiency—and in the latter, of a shadow which is cast by no reality. It therefore represents God and nature as eternally and necessarily coexistent, as the indissoluble phases of an absolute unity, as but the inner and outer side of the same whole, as but one existence under a double aspect. Theism takes

an intermediate view. It maintains with deism that God is a personal Being, who created the world intelligently and freely, and is above it and independent of it; but it maintains also with pantheism that He is everywhere present and active in the world, "upholding all things by the word of His power," and so inspiring and working in them that "in Him they live, and move, and have their being." It contradicts deism in so far as that system represents the universe as independent of God, and pantheism in so far as it represents God as dependent on the universe. It excludes what is erroneous and retains what is correct in both deism and pantheism. It is thus at once the pure truth and the whole truth.

Pantheism has appeared in a far greater variety of phases, and has presented a far richer combination of elements, than materialism. It has always endeavoured to comprehend and harmonise aspirations and facts, ideas and realities, the infinite and the finite. It has tried all methods of investigation and exposition, and has assumed a multitude of forms. It has had great constructive skill displayed on it, and has been adorned with all sorts of beauties. But just because its history is far broader and richer than that of materialism, it is also one which it is far more difficult worthily to delineate. It is not much to be wondered at that there should be no adequate history of pantheism.

I cannot attempt to trace even the general course of that history, and yet I cannot wholly ignore the subject, seeing that pantheism can only be understood through the study of its actual development. Nothing can be more delusive than an estimate of pantheism based exclusively on a definition or general description.[1]

I.

It is an error to regard India as the sole fountainhead of pantheism. Wherever we find traces of speculation on the origin of things, there we also find traces of pantheism. But nowhere was the soil so congenial to it as in India, and nowhere else has it flourished so luxuriantly. It has overspread the whole land — overgrown the whole Hindu mind and life. The pantheism of India, however, has always been to some extent combined or associated with theism. There are hymns in the Rig-Veda, relative to creation, which are distinctly more monotheistic than pantheistic. In many passages of the Upanishads, the national epics, and the philosophical soutras and commentaries, the Universal Soul is certainly not described as strictly impersonal. But theism in India was never either strong or pure, and has never been

[1] See Appendix XXXIV.

able even to hold its own against the deeply and firmly rooted pantheism of the land.

The literature of India shows us the successive stages through which its religion has passed. The earliest is that disclosed to us in the oldest Vedic hymns. It was a phase of religious naturalism. The objects and aspects of the universe, and especially light and its manifestations, assumed in the imaginations and feelings of the primitive Aryan settlers in India a divine character. The bright sky, the sun, the dawn, the fire, the winds, the clouds, were deemed by them to be instinct with life, thought, and affection—beings to whom prayers and sacrifices ought to be offered—agents at once physical and divine. With such deities, however, the mind could not long rest in a progressive society. They were too vague and indeterminate; they wanted character and individuality. The intellect, the imagination, the heart, craved for more definite personalities, and gradually developed naturalism into, or replaced it by, anthropomorphism. Elemental deities yielded to human deities. The two states indicated are, however, merely stages of a single process. The naturalism by no means wholly excluded the attributing of human qualities to the deified natural powers, and the anthropomorphism absorbed into itself much of the naturalism out of which it had grown. It would also seem that a certain con-

sciousness of an ultimate unity underlying the worshipped powers and persons — of a common Divine source, of which they were the issues and expressions—was never entirely extruded or extinguished by the polytheism of either of these two stages. It was in greatest danger, perhaps, of being lost under the latter, when imagination was actively creating anthropomorphic deities; but even then the craving of mind and heart after unity was seen in the exaltation of some one of the gods to supremacy. This led, however, only to self-contradiction and confusion; now one god, and now another—now Varuna, now Indra, now Agni —being represented and revered as the highest, or even the absolute, deity. With the rise and predominance of a cultured, thoughtful, speculative class, the priestly class, a more elevated, abstract, and comprehensive unity was conceived of—Brahma. The idea of Brahma is that of a being indefinable in itself, but perceptible in its forms, the substantial reality of all that exists, the universal life in which the world is absorbed and from which it issues. This idea was the natural result of the whole course of religious thought represented in the Vedas, although in the Vedas it is only found in a quite rudimentary condition. All subsequent Hindu speculation, however, contributed either directly or indirectly to evolve it. To explain in detail how and why, would be to write the longest

and most important chapter in the history of Hindu civilisation. In what we may call the straight line of development lie the works which may be regarded as the sources and authorities of the philosophy which is generally admitted to have most fully deduced the conclusions implied in the Vedas, and which is undoubtedly the completest expression of Hindu pantheism—the Vedanta philosophy. The chief stages of the growth of this philosophy out of its Vedic germ, can be traced by the help of the literary documents with considerable certainty; but I can, of course, merely indicate the general character of its doctrine.

The central idea in the Vedanta theory is, that there is only one real being, and that this being is absolutely one. All material things and finite minds are conceived of as but emanations from the sole entity, and all that seems to imply independent existence is referred to ignorance. The whole of science is comprised, according to Vedantism, in the one formula—"Brahma alone exists; everything else is illusion." The truth of this formula is held to be implied in the very idea of Brahma, as the one eternal, unlimited, pure, and perfect being. If there existed a multitude of realities which had an origin and an end, which were finite, compounded, and imperfect, they must have originated in Brahma. But this they could not have done, it is argued, unless Brahma had

within himself the real principle of multiplicity, limitation; or, in other words, unless he were really not one, not eternal, not perfect. To ascribe real being and individuality to anything but Brahma, is equivalent to denying that Brahma is Brahma. Nor can there be any qualities and distinctions in Brahma. The absolute unity must be at once absolute reality and absolute knowledge. Were absolute being and absolute knowing not identical, there could be no absolute identity, no being absolutely one. Brahma, the universal soul, is the absolute knowledge which is inclusive of, and self-identical with, reality. But absolute knowledge cannot be the knowledge of anything, for this implies the distinction of subject and object, which is of itself a limitation both of subject and object. Absolute knowledge must exclude the dualism of subject and object, and every kind of synthesis and relation.

Thus argues the Vedantist. What are we to think of his argument? Merely that it is logically valid. It deduces correctly a false conclusion from a false principle. He who will hold to the belief in an absolute abstract unity must necessarily identify knowing and being, and deny that pure knowing admits of a distinction between subject and object. But such a unity as this cannot be reasonably entertained by the mind. To ask reason to start from it, is to ask it to

start with a contradiction of its own fundamental laws. Besides, no kind of multiplicity or diversity can ever be shown to be consistent with such unity. The existence in some sense, however, of a multitude of different things, cannot be denied and must be accounted for. We perceive a variety of separate finite objects and are conscious of imperfection and limitation in ourselves. We do not perceive an infinite unity which is neither subject nor object, and which is perfect and unlimited, nor are we conscious of identity with it. How are we to explain this on the Vedantist hypothesis? How are we to reconcile the reason which denies with the consciousness which affirms distinctions and limitations? How are we to connect the one and the many, the absolute and the relative?

The hypothesis of emanation may be had recourse to, but it is obviously insufficient. Emanation is a physical process, and only possible because matter is essentially multiple and divisible. The fire sends forth sparks just because it is no unity but a multitude—an aggregate. The sparks are not identical either with one another or with the fire; they and all other parts of the fire are distinct from one another, although all the parts are of the same sort. The notion of emanation and the notion of absolute unity are exclusive of each other. The Vedantists saw this, and confessed that all the similes which they made use

of drawn from instances of emanation in physical nature were radically defective. They claimed no more for them than that they might help intelligence in what they described as its dream-state, to believe that nothing exists except Brahma. In other words, they admitted that these similes were addressed, not to the reason, but to the imagination. Hence it was necessary for them to supplement the hypothesis of emanation by another—that of illusion caused by ignorance.

The problem which they had to solve was to reconcile their theory of only one being with their consciousness of many beings. It was a problem which they could not solve, but they so far concealed their failure to solve it by making, as Dr Ballantyne has said, "the fact itself do duty for its own cause." The soul does not know that God alone is, and that finite souls and finite things are not, because it does not know it—because it is ignorant. Were it not for ignorance the worlds of sense and consciousness would not appear—God alone would be. It is ignorance which has made the appearances that we call worlds and souls, and these appearances are mere illusions—deceits. They are māyā. It is impossible, of course, to find any satisfaction in such an hypothesis. Who is it that Brahma is deceiving? Himself. Why should he do that? And how can he do it? Ignorance and illusion are im-

plied in our consciousness of the world and of self being false, but they are not implied in, nor even consistent with, its being true that there is no being save one absolute and perfect being. The latter supposition precludes the possibility of ignorance, appearance, illusion, &c. The Vedantists, however, could not dispense with ignorance and illusion. It was only thus that they could seem to adhere to their absolute unity. It was only in the state of illusion that they could think of Brahma, and only with the help even of very material imagery that they could speak of him.

I might now proceed to explain the Vedanta theory of the three qualities of ignorance, which, separately or in combination, obscure the knowledge which constitutes the essence of the soul; and of its two powers, the one originating belief in our consciousness of personality, and the other accounting for the dream that there is an external world. I might also dwell on the Vedanta theory of the nature and laws of the evolution of phenomena. The transformations of Brahma, of which the evolution consists, are supposed to take place according to both a diminishing and an increasing progression, the former being from more to less perfect, and the latter from less to more definite. I am compelled, however, to leave unconsidered these and other portions of the system, and must

content myself with merely stating that the theory of human life and destiny, based on the view of God and nature which has been delineated, is just that which we should have anticipated. The end of man is regarded as the perfect repose which must result from union with the absolute. It is held to be only attainable through the science which is comprised in the formula — "one only without a second." The way to reach true science is maintained to be meditation on Revelation, with renunciation of the world and pious dispositions and exercises. The effects of it are described as freedom from ignorance, error, the possibility of sin, desire, activity, transmigration, and change. Whoever knows Brahma becomes Brahma. He is freed from the illusion that he has any distinct personal existence. He shakes off pleasure and pain, virtue and vice, all distinctions and qualities. He returns into the essence whence he came, and attains the highest identity. In a word, from the pantheism of the Vedanta philosophy, all its chief consequences are deduced with a boldness and consistency which justify its claim to be regarded as among the greatest systems to which speculation has given birth.

In the pantheism of the Vedanta doctrine the finite is lost in the infinite. Along with the affirmation of an impersonal God there is the negation of the reality of the worlds, both of sense and con-

sciousness. In other words, the issue of this kind of pantheism is acosmism. But pantheism is just as likely to issue in atheism. Those who are determined to reach an absolute unity, while yet feeling constrained to admit that physical objects and finite minds have a veritable existence, must sacrifice the infinite to the finite—God to nature,—must represent God as an abstraction and nullity. From this virtual atheism there is but a step to avowed atheism. The Sankhya philosophy and Buddhism are the Hindu exemplifications of this tendency of pantheistic speculation.[1]

From India let us pass on to Greece. In India philosophy as a rule rests on the Vedas. Its systems are classed as orthodox or heterodox. Hence Hegel has aptly compared the Hindu to the scholastic systems, as being systems of philosophy within systems of theology. Even the Sankhya system, which can hardly be said to acknowledge the authority of the Vedas, and which is really atheistical in character, yet proposes to itself for final aim a religious end, the securing of salvation to man, and recommends the pursuit of truth only as a means to that end. In Greece it was otherwise. Philosophy there had from the first a sort of consciousness of a function of its own. It invoked no anterior or supernatural authority. The influence of religion upon it was real and

[1] See Appendix XXXV.

considerable, but indirect and secondary. It was content to trust entirely in reason, and to aim at nothing beyond truth.

All the pre-Socratic schools of Greek philosophy, with the exception of that of Democritus, were more or less pantheistic; but only in the Eleatic philosophy does early Greek pantheism appear fully developed. It bears a most striking resemblance to the Vedanta theory. Almost all that is needed to convert Vedanta doctrine into Eleatic doctrine is to substitute the word Being for the word Brahma. The more closely I have examined and compared the two systems, the more I have been impressed with this truth; and yet there can be no doubt that the one system was as thoroughly Greek as the other was thoroughly Hindu.

The Eleatic philosophy was founded by Xenophanes, and brought to perfection by Parmenides. I shall state very briefly its leading principles as taught by the latter. His cardinal principle is the opposition of being and appearance, truth and opinion, reason and sense. To being corresponds reason; to appearance, sense. Reason apprehending being is truth; sense apprehending appearance is opinion. Being and appearance, reason and sense, truth and opinion, are essentially irreconcilable and contradictory. All truth belongs to reason, which alone can apprehend being. There

is no truth in sense; and the credit which men attach to its testimony is merely a proof of their tendency to follow "the road of appearance, where nought but fallacy reigneth." Parmenides had the courage to challenge the authority of external impressions, and of all reasoning from them, and distinctly to deny that material things exist as we see them, or need exist at all because we believe that we see them. So far as the senses and their objects were concerned, he was an avowed sceptic. His scepticism, however, was a means, and not an end. He denied, and laboured to destroy, the authority of sense, but only in order to affirm and establish the authority of reason. He desired that reason should rule without a rival. His philosophy was, therefore, essentially not scepticism, but dogmatic idealism. It rested on reason alone, and on reason understood in the strictest, narrowest, most exclusive manner—on reason reduced to a single idea, and expressed in a single truth.

What was the truth which he regarded as the one truth, the whole truth? It was this: "Being is, and cannot but be; not-being is not, and cannot be. One can affirm everything of being, and nothing of not-being." He started where his predecessor, Xenophanes, ended. Xenophanes passed from the thought of God to the thought of absolute being; Parmenides began with absolute being. He was quite aware of the sort of contradiction

involved in saying at one and the same time, "not-being is not, and cannot be," and "one can affirm nothing of not-being." He felt that he had to speak so because the very notion of not-being is a contradiction, and all speech about it must be a contradiction. "One can neither know not-being," he said, "nor express it in words: for it has in it no possibility of being." His not-being did not mean non-existence, but all that sense and ordinary thought apprehend as existence; it included earth, air, ocean, and the minds of men. The whole multiple and divisible universe was what he held to be the not-being, which is to reason a contradiction so great that it is impossible even to speak of it in a rational manner. His "what is not is not" was not a truism, but a paradox.

In deducing a doctrine of being, Parmenides displayed great speculative boldness and ability. I can merely state the results at which he arrived. 1°, Being, he argued, is absolutely one. It is not an abstract unity, but the only reality. It so is that it alone is. 2°, Being, he further affirmed, is continuous and indivisible; it is everywhere like to itself, and everywhere alike present. Were there parts in being there would be plurality, and being would not be one—that is, would not be being. There can be no differences or distinctions in being; for what is different and distinct from being must be not-being, and not-being is not.

3°, Being, he also maintained, is incapable of change or motion in space. It cannot exist either in a state of rest or movement analogous to the rest and movement of the material world. We conceive of bodies only as in space, and of their changes only as changes of their parts relative to different points of space; but absolute being has no parts with relations to the different points of what is called space. Bodies and their parts, space and its points, are mere appearances, with which true being has nothing in common. 4°, Being, he further argued, is immobile in time. It can have neither birth nor destruction, past nor future. 5°, Being was affirmed by him to be perfect—itself alone an end or limit to itself. 6°, Being, he likewise held—anticipating Hegel as he had anticipated Kant—is identical with thought. It could not otherwise be absolutely one. "Thought," he said, "is the same thing as being. Thought must be being; for being exists, and non-being is nothing." And again, "But thought is identical with its object; for without being, on which it rests, you will not find thought—nothing, in fact, is or will be distinct from being."

Parmenides, you will perceive, was not a man easily daunted. Pantheism has rarely been more consistent and complete than it was in his hands. The world was as entirely lost in his Being as in the Vedantist Brahma. But as in India, so in Greece, there was a pantheism of a contrary kind—one in

which unity was virtually lost in multiplicity, the absolute in the phenomenal. Perhaps the Heraclitean doctrine was the best example presented by the history of Greek philosophy of a pantheism of this kind. Heraclitus, having sought in vain for any permanent principle, for any absolute being, was led to maintain that the universe is merely a process of incessant change; that its essence is not being, but becoming; that fire pervaded by intelligence is its universal ground and fittest symbol; and that the human mind is a portion of the all-pervasive mind, and can only attain truth through communion with it.

With Socrates and Plato the course of speculation took, on the whole, a theistic direction. In Aristotle it tended rather towards pantheism. Stoicism was originally and predominantly a materialistic or hylozoic form of pantheism; but some of its greatest representatives conceived of God in a decidedly theistic manner as the supreme moral reason. In stoicism everything was subordinated to morality, and only its ethics was sublime. Its theology was crude and confused, and I pass over it without regret.[1]

II.

Christianity did not arrest the progress of pantheism as it did that of materialism. On the

[1] See Appendix XXXVI.

contrary, it seemed to stimulate and increase its activity. In the second, third, fourth, and fifth centuries of our era there was a vast amount of pantheistic speculation influenced by and influencing Christianity, sometimes directly opposing it, sometimes endeavouring to incorporate its doctrines and establish them on a philosophical basis, and sometimes claiming to be identical with it and entitled to its authority. I need only remind you of the Gnostic systems, and of the Neo-Platonic philosophy of Alexandria. When Gnosticism and Neo-Platonism seemed to be vanquished and destroyed, they were, in reality, merely transformed. They entered into Judaism with the Cabbala, and into Christianity with the writings of the so-called Dionysius the Areopagite. On the threshold of the middle ages a very remarkable man—John Scott Erigena—made a most vigorous and elaborate attempt to reconcile and combine a pantheistic philosophy and the doctrine of the Christian Church, on the assumption that philosophy and religion are substantially one—philosophy veiled in the form of tradition being religion, and religion unveiled from the form of tradition by reason being philosophy. He explained Scripture as the symbolic self-manifestation of the absolute, and gave ingenious speculative expositions of the Trinity, the creation of the world and of man, the incarnation of the Logos, &c., according to prin-

ciples derived from Plotinus and Proclus, Origen and Maximus the Confessor, and especially the pseudo-Dionysius. The latest English historian of pantheism tells us that there was little or no pantheism in the middle ages. This is about as accurate as it would be to say that there are no Methodists at present in England or Ultramontanists in France. Pantheism was prevalent all through the middle ages; and medieval pantheism, unlike modern pantheism, was not confined to speculative individuals, but was adopted by considerable communities—the Beghards and Beguines, the Brothers and Sisters of the Free Spirit, the Turlupins, the Adamites, the Familists, the Spiritual Libertines, &c. This popular pantheism was partly due to the persistence of the ancient pagan spirit among the uneducated masses, and partly to reaction from the externality and formalism which characterised medieval Christianity. It died away before the light of the Reformation, owing to Protestantism giving to the religious instincts of the people a satisfaction which Romanism denied to them.

In the year 1600 the brilliant inaugurator of modern pantheism, Jordano Bruno, was burned at Rome. His bold, teeming, imaginative mind, susceptible to the most varied influences, originated a grandiose system, rich in its elements and vast in its scope, but devoid of self-consistency.

method, and proof. It combined without harmonising the Eleatic, Neo-Platonic, and naturalistic pantheisms; naturalism being perhaps predominant, owing to the powerful hold which the discoveries of Copernicus, and the idea of an infinity of worlds, had taken of the author's mind. Bruno was the precursor of Spinoza, by whom his writings were carefully studied.[1]

Baruch Spinoza (1632-77) is the most celebrated of all pantheists, and I must delineate as distinctly as I can within the narrow limits to which I am confined his theory of God, and of the relation of God to the universe. It is a theory which was drawn from a multitude of sources — the Talmud, the Cabbala, Maimonides, Ben Gerson, Chasdai Creskas, Bruno, Descartes, &c.—which was slowly and gradually developed, and which passed through various phases in its author's mind before it was elaborated into the shape which it assumed in the last and greatest of his works, the 'Ethica.' It is in its final form that we must look at it.

Thinking philosophy ought to be purely deductive—ought to start from a single point fixed by the necessities of reason, and be carried on by sheer force of logic in the form of a continuous demonstration to all its consequences—Spinoza very naturally, and had his supposition been cor-

[1] See Appendix XXXVII.

rect, very justly, imagined that the order of knowledge must be the same as the order of existence. What is first in reality must, he thought, be first in science. So he began with God, the first, the self-existent Being. This, however, cannot but be a stumbling-block to all who believe that the inductive process is that of philosophy, or even that philosophy has to take account of the results of the inductive sciences. In all inductive science, principles which are first in the order of nature are last in the order of intelligence. It is only in mathematical science that first principles are first in the order both of nature and intelligence. All, therefore, who cannot admit that philosophy is mathematical or demonstrative science—who acknowledge that unity is her goal or aim, but deny that it is her starting-point—will feel that Spinoza has begun at the wrong end, however natural it may have been for him to begin at that end.

His doctrine of the Divine nature is unfolded in a series of thirty-seven propositions, all professedly demonstrated, and many of them having corollaries and scholia. This series of propositions is prefaced by eight definitions and seven axioms. Most of the axioms look very innocent, but they are not as innocent as they look. There seems to be no danger in assenting to such an affirmation as "All that is, is either in itself, or in some thing other than itself," which is axiom first; but danger

there is; and you will find this axiom used under proposition sixth to prove that there is nothing in the universe but substance and the affections of substance; under proposition fifteenth, to prove that thought and extension are either attributes of God, or modes of His attributes; and so in many other places, precisely as if there was only one way of being *in* a thing, or as if *in* denoted a particular kind of inherence. It seems quite safe to assent to a statement like this, "Whatever can be thought of as non-existing does not in its essence involve existence," but no; it is true only if it is the truism, Whatever can be thought of as non-existing need not be thought of as existing; whereas it is not so understood, but in application is made to do duty for the very different affirmation, What can be conceived of as existing in its essence involves existence, so as to conceal in some measure one great failure of the system—its inability to establish that the notions it deals with answer to what really exists.

The definitions, unlike the axioms, present difficulties which almost every one who reads them in some measure feels. Spinoza had given them many an altering touch to bring them into the form which they bear in the Ethics, as he always found that, although they seemed to him the simplest and most self-evident truths, his friends felt it difficult to accept, or even to under

stand them. I have no time to examine these definitions of "cause of itself," "the finite in its kind," "substance," "attribute," "mode," "God," "free and necessary," "eternity;" but I must enter my decided protest against the opinion expressed by Mr Lewes and others, that no criticism of them is needed, since they are definitions of terms. "They need not," says Mr Lewes, "long be dwelt on, although frequently referred to by Spinoza; above all, no objection ought to be raised against them as unusual or untrue, for they are the meanings of various terms in constant use with Spinoza, and he has a right to use them as he pleases, provided he does not afterwards depart from this use, which he is careful not to do." Well, no doubt Spinoza had so far a right to define the terms he intended to use as he pleased, on condition of keeping strictly to his definitions, but he may also have abused his right. Euclid might have called the circle a square and the square a circle, might have interchanged the names of line and surface and solid, yet defined them all correctly, and reasoned on them all correctly; but it would have been a very unwise thing in him to have thus severed and opposed the popular and scientific use of these terms, and would have led to much confusion even in mathematics. Now Spinoza has done something not very different from this in his definitions of "substance," "mode," "free

and necessary," and "eternity." Further, if we may not object to a man's definitions of terms as unusual or untrue, we certainly may object to them if obscure, if ambiguous, if self-contradictory, if definitions of the inherently absurd. If Euclid's definition of a circle, for example, had been difficult to understand, or if it had been as true of a square as of a circle, or if he had offered us a definition of a square circle, or of parallel lines that meet, we should have had abundance of reason to object. And obscurity, ambiguity, self-contradiction, are just the charges which will be brought against such definitions as those which Spinoza gives of "cause of itself" and "substance." As to the statement that he was careful not to depart from that use of his terms which he prescribed to himself by his definitions, I have no doubt that he was careful—that he did his best—being thoroughly honest and sincere, anxious to deceive no one, anxious not to deceive himself; but I have as little doubt that with all his care he was not successful, and that his use of terms was often inconsistent with his definitions, or consistent only through the ambiguity of the definitions. Nor could he help himself. A man who reasoned in geometry from definitions of square circles and parallel lines that meet, would find it impossible to be consistent in his use of terms; scarcely more possible was a consistent use of them to one who

started, like Spinoza, with definitions of "cause of itself" and "substance in itself."

His central definition is that of God: "God is a being absolutely infinite; in other words, God is substance, constituted by an infinity of attributes, each of which expresses an eternal and infinite essence." This is presented to us as an intuitive truth, clear and certain in its own self-evidence, as a principle on which we may safely reason to any length, with the conviction of knowing as thoroughly what it means as we know what Euclid means by isosceles, or scalene, or right-angled triangle. In reality, it is far more mysterious than any proposition contained in the creeds of the Church respecting the Trinity or the Incarnation. It is difficult to understand how Spinoza could expect that men would receive as self-evident, on the bare statement of it, such an assertion as that "God is substance constituted by an infinity of attributes;" or how he could overlook that if substance is constituted by attributes it cannot be what he himself defines it to be, "that which is in itself, and is conceived by itself, or that the conception of which does not involve the conception of anything else as that from which it is formed." The definition of God I have called Spinoza's central definition, because it includes, takes up into itself, the other definitions. There occur in it, you will have observed, the words substance, attribute, infinite,

eternal. It includes, therefore, directly, the defini tions given of these four words. It includes the word "essence," which should have been defined here, and is defined in part second. It includes the phrase "absolutely infinite," which receives not a definition, but an explanation that amounts to a definition. The only definitions which it does not directly include are those of "cause in itself," "free," and "mode;" but the two former are so defined as to be identical with substance, as to be substance itself in two aspects, and the last as an affection of substance. Directly or indirectly, therefore, the definition of God includes all the other definitions. The consequence is obvious. It is that, directly or indirectly, that definition includes all that is obscure, ambiguous, self-contradictory, in all the definitions. It is a guarantee that whatever there is of this kind in any of these definitions will be worked into the doctrine of the Divine nature, and will corrupt that doctrine.

Spinoza was not fortunate, then, at the commencement of his undertaking. Was he more successful afterwards? Some persons think so. Spinozism has been pronounced "a faultless demonstration." This is far from my opinion. The paralogisms, the fallacies, in Spinoza are, I believe, simply countless, because he started with vague and ambiguous principles and pursued a hopeless course. Had he been less convinced that he was

right, or less able, he would have been stopped at countless points; but the intense and honest conviction of being right could not make him to be right, and no ability could achieve the impossible.

The whole of his doctrine concerning God is in germ in his definition of God. The first great stage in its development is formed by the attempted proof of the identity of the ideas of God and of substance. The notion of substance defined, as has been mentioned, is the foundation of his definition of God, of his entire theological doctrine, of his whole philosophy. A less solid or secure foundation there could not be. Substance in itself, which is what is defined, is simply what no human mind has ever apprehended or can apprehend. Every attempt to define substance in itself, or to reason on it, must be repelled as a violation of the laws of human thought, of the essential limitations of human knowledge. Spinozism is a system founded on this error. Spinoza had the firmest conviction that he had a clear, distinct, and true idea of substance in itself, that he might safely trust his fortunes to it, and that all that he could infer from it by strict logic would be eternal verities, certain as anything in Euclid, far more certain than mere experience and sense. He proceeded accordingly to demonstrate, as he supposed, such propositions concerning it as that substance is prior in nature to its accidents; that two substances having dif-

ferent attributes have nothing in common with each other; that it is impossible that there should be two or more substances of the same nature or of the same attribute; that one substance cannot be created by another substance; that to exist pertains to the nature of substance; that all substance is necessarily infinite; that all substance is absolutely infinite; that this sole and singular substance —this absolutely infinite substance—is God, in whom whatever is is, without whom nothing can be conceived, of whom all that is must be some sort of attributes or modes. Thus he gradually worked out the conclusion that God is the one and all of substance, beyond which there is nothing, and in which all that is has such being as belongs to it.

The second great stage in the development of his doctrine of the Divine nature is the deduction of the attributes of the one absolutely infinite substance. An attribute is defined by him as "whatever the intellect perceives of substance as constituting the essence of substance." Substance and attributes are inseparable. Substance has necessarily attributes, each of which expresses in its own way the essence of substance, and is therefore, as that essence is, infinite, although only in its own way. Substance has necessarily even an infinity of attributes, for it is absolutely infinite, and only an infinity of attributes can adequately repre-

sent a nature which is not only infinite but absolutely or infinitely infinite. Out of this infinite number of attributes two only are known to us,—extension and thought. God is conceived as thinking substance when He is apprehended by the mind under the attribute of thought, and as extended substance when He is conceived under the attribute of extension; but thinking substance and extended substance are not two substances distinct from one another, but the one substance apprehended by the mind of man, now under this attribute, now under that. Extension as a Divine attribute is, according to Spinoza, very different from the finite extension which belongs to body: it has no length, bulk, depth, shape, divisibility, or movability, and in referring it to Deity none of these things are referred to Him; it is incapable of being apprehended by sense or imagination; capable only of being apprehended by reason. Divine thought is likewise altogether different from human thought: it is absolute thought—thought which has infinite substance itself for object; which is in no way limited or determined; which is unconditioned by anything like a faculty of understanding; which falls under no law of succession, separation, or plurality.

The doctrine has still another stage. Substance with its attributes is God as the cause or source of the universe. But what is the universe itself?

What are the sun and stars, earth and ocean? What are living things, human bodies and human minds, human experience and human history? They are, Spinoza argues, modes of the attributes of God. Modes express the essence of the attributes as the attributes express the essence of substance. The modes of each attribute are necessarily finite in nature, because an attribute is not a substance, and therefore not infinitely infinite; but they are necessarily infinite in number, because each attribute has a real although particular infinity. Infinite thought must express itself by an infinite number of ideas, and infinite extension by an infinite variety of magnitudes, forms, and motions. These modes constitute and compose the whole world of the senses and the whole world of consciousness. Man himself is but a combination of these modes. His soul is a mode of Divine thought, and his body is a mode of Divine extension.

I think this doctrine must be admitted to be devoid neither of simplicity nor grandeur. It has certainly been constructed with wonderful architectonic skill. God is the one and all. He is the infinitely infinite, the only substance. From this substance necessarily proceeds an infinity of particular attributes. From each attribute necessarily proceeds an infinite number of finite. These modes constitute what is called the universe. There is

nothing which is not necessarily evolved from, and essentially included in, God. Of course this is pantheism. And yet it is very easy to err as to where the pantheism of it lurks, as a few remarks may help to show.

Take the first stage of the doctrine which has been delineated. Many have thought that when Spinoza has reached the conclusion that there is only one substance, and that God is that substance, he has attained the completest possible pantheism. But no ; pantheism is still, properly speaking, far distant. For Spinoza includes, it must be remembered, in his definition of substance, as the very essence of what he means by it, the notion of self-existence. We may fairly object that it was injudicious thus to give the word a meaning so unusual ; still, of course, we must interpret it as he was pleased to employ it. Do this, however, and manifestly there is no substance but God, for there is no other self-existent being. Everything else, everything in nature, every finite mind, exists only through another than itself, exists only through God—*i.e.*, is not a Spinozistic substance. In like manner, the proposition that one substance cannot be produced by another substance has been represented as equivalent to a denial of the possibility and reality of creation, a denial of the very first words of the Bible,—"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." But again there is

obvious misconception. If God created the heavens and the earth, the heavens and the earth are not self-existent—are not, according to Spinoza, substances. Spinoza does not deny that God produced things, but that He produced things the essences of which involve existence. What he affirms is, that God is not only the cause why things begin to exist, but also why they continue in existence. His language is pantheistic in sound, but had he adhered strictly to his own definitions it would have been quite consistent with theism in signification. Not unnaturally, however, he was the dupe of his own language, and fancied that he disproved the possibility of creation in the ordinary acceptation of the doctrine.

When we pass to his theory of the Divine attributes we find that, under a specious appearance of consistency, it is so incoherent and confused that no definite designation can be appropriately attached to it. We welcome his affirmation that God has an infinity of attributes which are unknown to us, as an admission that God in infinite ways transcends the powers of apprehension possessed by finite minds. But we are compelled to ask, Can there be in a substance which is absolutely one, as conceived of by Spinoza, any attributes which are not relative to minds distinct from that substance? Can there be any attributes objectively in the substance itself? If the answer be

in the negative—be that the attributes of substance exist only for minds, or arise only from the relations of substance to minds—substance is obviously not the absolute and comprehensive unity from which all proceeds, but implies, yea, presupposes the existence of minds which are distinct from it. It becomes impossible to regard it as the primary and universal existence, apart from which nothing is, or as more than a merely secondary and particular object of mind. If the answer be in the affirmative, the notion of substance is none the less displaced and destroyed. The unity of substance disappears, for, as by Spinoza's express declaration, each attribute is essentially distinct from every other, the substance is represented as an aggregation of distinct and irreducible essences. The whole being even of substance disappears, for the attributes must exhaust the substance of which they are the necessary and complete expression. The absolute substance vanishes, and in its place appears an infinite number of unconnected attributes.

Of these attributes Spinoza professed to explain only two—extension and thought. He does so on the ground that these are the only attributes of which the human understanding has any knowledge. Yet the general outcome of his argumentation regarding them is that the human understanding has virtually no knowledge of them.

Because he said that God is extended, some have inferred that he supposed God to be corporeal; but he endeavoured to guard himself against this error by denying to extension everything which characterises body, and ascribing to it a number of peculiarities which body does not possess. As to thought, he maintained that thought in God is of an entirely different nature from thought in man—that the one bears no more resemblance to the other than the dog, a sign in the heavens, does to the dog, an animal which barks. Thus the only two attributes which he admits to be accessible to the human mind he also represents as really inaccessible to it, and utterly unlike the extension or thought of which we have any experience. If the Divine thought have no more resemblance to human thought than the dog-star to the dog that barks, we have no knowledge of the former whatever, and merely deceive ourselves when we call it thought at all. This so-called pantheism, instead of helping us to realise that God is near to us, practically assures us that God as God, as *natura naturans*, is unknowable by us, and, in fact, that there is no God who can be a God for the human mind.

At the third stage of his theory, Spinoza maintains that all finite things are modes of the Divine attributes of the one Divine substance. No language could be more pantheistic as mere language.

But, of course, it must be remembered that by confining the name of substance to the self-existent, self-subsistent, he had condemned himself to the use of pantheistic language, however free of pantheistic taint his thought might have been. He could not call finite things substances ; he must deny them to be substances. What could he call them ? Once you agree to restrict the term substance to what is absolute and self-existent, it matters comparatively little what name you give to that which is relative and created. If you call it a mode, that means merely that it is derived from and dependent on what is self-existent. Spinoza's language, "all finite things are modes of the one Divine substance," means no more, if strictly interpreted, than that all finite things are derived from, and dependent on, the one self-existent Being. Unfortunately, however, he has made it impossible for us thus to interpret him. His language must be read in the light of the fact that he withholds alike from the substance and the modes—from the self-existent Being and the derivative and dependent existences — freedom of will, true personality. He affirms, indeed, that God is free ; but he is careful to explain that by free he really means necessary ; that Divine liberty is Divine activity necessarily determined by the Divine nature, although independent of any extraneous cause. He also expressed his belief

in the Divine personality, even when admitting that he could form no clear conception of it, but practically he ignored it in his theory. The result was the sacrifice of all individual lives, of all personal character and action, of all freedom and responsibility, to a dead, unintelligible, fatalistic unity. Spinoza was a man of a singularly pure and noble nature, yet he was compelled by the force of logic to draw from his pantheism immoral and slavish consequences which would speedily ruin any individual or nation that ventured to adopt them.

It would not have been difficult to draw from it atheism itself. That was certainly not what Spinoza taught or meant to teach. What he maintained was, that the Divine existence is the one true existence, and that the whole system of what we call nature exists only through connection with it. He did not say that space, as we understand space, and time, in the sense of duration, and the worlds which are in space and time, and what these worlds contain, are all that there is; on the contrary, he said that, besides these things, there was the whole universe of true being—substance with infinite attributes unknown to us, and with others somewhat known, absolute extension, absolute eternity, absolute thought, absolute activity. None the less did his idea of God involve the

very doctrine to which it seemed to be the contrary extreme. If the absolute substance must express itself necessarily and completely in its attributes, it must be absorbed and exhausted in these attributes; and if they in turn must necessarily and completely evolve into modes, only modes will remain. It may be said that substance, attributes and modes are eternally distinct, although eternally connected; but this cannot be rationally thought or believed if absolute activity be necessary activity. In this case the monism of Spinoza must inevitably disintegrate and dissolve into monadism—his pantheism into atheism or naturalism.[1]

I have dwelt at some length on Spinozism from a desire to present one good example of what a pantheistic system is, it being impossible for me in the circumstances to delineate a variety of typical instances. I might have selected my specimen from later times, and discoursed on the pantheism of a Fichte, or Schelling, or Hegel. But I am convinced that this would have been unprofitable. The theories of any of these thinkers can only be intelligently exhibited and fairly criticised in lengthened expositions which permit much explanation and illustration. Good brief summaries of their systems exist in various histories of phil-

[1] See Appendix XXXVIII.

osophy, but I doubt if unprofessional students will be greatly the wiser after the perusal even of the best of them.

So far as the philosophies of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel were pantheistic in their nature, or had a pantheistic interpretation imposed upon them, they presented only very inadequate and unworthy views of God. He is surely not to be identified with the moral order of the universe, or with an absolute indifference of subject and object which develops itself in reality and ideality, nature and spirit, or with a self-evolving impersonal process which, after having traversed all the spheres of matter and mind, attains a knowledge of its Godhead in the speculative reason of man. These are not rational thoughts but foolish fancies, although there may have been associated with them much that is true, suggestive, and profound. It was natural, therefore, that the idealistic pantheism attributed to the philosophers just named should have very soon almost disappeared even in Germany itself. It was like a fountain of mingled sweet and bitter waters which had scarcely emerged into the light of day before they parted into two distinct streams, the one being that which is known as speculative theism, and the other bearing various names, but always presenting some phase of naturalistic or humanitarian atheism. Pantheism is always in unstable equilibrium be-

tween theism and atheism, and is logically necessitated to elevate itself to the one or to descend to the other.[1]

When idealism is followed from Germany into France it becomes still more difficult to decide whether or not it is to be described as pantheism in any of the forms which it has there assumed. The Abbé Maret, one of the historians of pantheism, represents not only M. Cousin but all the chief members of the Eclectic school as pantheists. This is, however, a very exaggerated view. M. Cousin himself can merely be charged with holding tenets which involve pantheism, not with explicitly teaching it; while the eclectics as a body have maintained the cause of theism with conspicuous zeal and talent. The views of M. Renan as to Deity are so vague and incoherent that one hesitates to attach to them any name. He prays with rapt devotion to the Father, the Father in heaven, and we fancy we are overhearing the supplications of a Christian theist; he vows, "I think there is not in the universe an intelligence superior to that of man," and we conclude that he is an atheist; he asks, "Who knows if the highest term of progress after millions of ages may not evoke the absolute consciousness of the universe, and in this consciousness the awakening of all that lived?" and we answer here is

[1] See Appendix XXXIX.

pantheism: but what he really is, or even in the main is it is almost impossible to ascertain. The theism, I fear, is a mere semblance, and "Our Father in heaven" on his lips merely equivalent to "Our Father the abyss," to whom he assures us that "we feel ourselves to be in mysterious affinity." The true state of his mind, if we may venture to say so, appears to be one of perpetual oscillation between atheism and pantheism—between a God who is merely "the category of the ideal" and a God who is a blind but mighty fatality, labouring to bring forth by a slow and painful self-evolution an absolute intelligence—a man-God, in whose consciousness the thoughts and feelings of all the generations of humanity may be comprehended.

The ablest attempt which has been made in France in the present day to substitute for the ordinary idea of God one derived from the principles of idealism, is that of M. Vacherot in his 'Metaphysics and Science.' With all his speculative enthusiasm and talent, however, he has only reached the poor result that God must be regarded as the ideal of the reason, as abstract but not real being, as what exists only by thought and for thought. We can scarcely call this pantheism, because, instead of implying that God is the source, substance, and explanation of the universe, it supposes that He is the source,

substance, and explanation of nothing—existing merely as a notion.[1]

In our English speech pantheism has been sung by Shelley, preached by Emerson, and recommended in loose rhetorical fashion by various writers, but it has not yet been presented in the form of a carefully reasoned theory.[2]

[1] See Appendix XL. [2] See Appendix XLI.

LECTURE X.

PANTHEISM.

I.

WHEN we observe how widespread pantheism is, and has always been, we are naturally led to ask, Why has it proved so attractive? The consideration of this question may be combined with that of another equally important: Does it deserve to be as attractive as it has actually proved to be? These are the two questions which I shall keep before me in the present lecture. While endeavouring so far to answer both, I shall consider them, as I have just indicated, not apart, but in connection. Thus viewed they are practically equivalent to the single question, What are the real and apparent merits and defects of pantheism?

Let us, in the first place, seek an answer by judging of pantheism as a response to the purely and properly religious wants of human nature.

Now, obviously, pantheism is in this reference incomparably superior to atheism. In every form it gives some answer to our religious cravings. In every form atheism gives none. Pantheism always presents at least a little sustenance for the spirit, and sometimes a comparatively rich supply. Atheism yields nothing whatever which can satisfy the higher appetites of a human being. It pronounces everything a vanity except what is finite and fleeting. It is most natural, therefore, that the general mind and heart of humanity should never have hesitated when the alternative presented to it was pantheism or atheism to prefer the former.

Then pantheism has a decided advantage over polytheism in virtue of its emphatic affirmation of the unity and infinity of God. It responds, in consequence, to imperative demands of reason which polytheism contradicts. Hence while the human mind has always found itself compelled, as soon as it began to philosophise, either to assail polytheistic beliefs or to interpret them in a way which changes their entire character, it has, on the contrary, been always led by speculation to adopt pantheistic tenets. It is just when polytheism begins to pass into pantheism that philosophy makes its appearance; and, in fact, it is the philosophy which accounts for the transition. Further, pantheism has the power of rendering polytheism subservient to its advancement. It can provide it with

a basis of intellectual principles; it can devise plausible reasons even for its most extravagant details; it can make itself indispensable to it; and by doing so it can secure the assistance of all the forces of faith and superstition possessed by polytheism. This may be a source of enormous influence, as the example of India convincingly shows.

Further, pantheism has a certain marked superiority over every doctrine or system which leads men to think of creation as independent of the Creator, or of God as withdrawn from His creatures. Where theism has degenerated into deism, or Christianity into a mere intellectual creed, it is not unnatural that pantheism should prevail. In such a case its spread may serve a providential purpose as a counterpoise to the opposite extreme of error. It is the expression of a sense of a Divine presence in the universe. It insists on the all-pervading activity of God. It is belief in Him as One

> "Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean, and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
> A motion and a spirit, which impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things."

In the possession of this truth it has nothing which a true theism, such as we find in the Bible,

has not also, but it has a truth which the human soul needs, which theists have often not prized enough, and which many professed theists have virtually forgotten altogether.

Pantheism likewise ministers in some degree to devout emotion and affection by centring all in, and even by sacrificing all to, the one absolute Existence. It teaches men to rise both above the good and the evil of the visible and temporal world, and to yearn after eternal rest in the world of immutable being. It teaches them to sacrifice egotism and to glory in being parts and particles of God. That many minds can find a certain satisfaction and strength in this teaching the wide prevalence of pantheism in religion abundantly proves. It pervades all Hindu religion, and elicits and sustains in many a Hindu mind a piety which concentrates the thoughts and energies with such wonderful intensity and exclusiveness on eternity, that time and the things of time appear only the delusions of a dream. It has in every age of Christian history presented itself either as the rival and opponent of Christian doctrine, or with the claim to be its highest and truest expression; and many great and elevated minds have been found to listen to it, and to look to the absorption in the Infinite which it promises as their highest good.

Pantheism, however, falls far short of giving such satisfaction to the religious wants of man as a true

theism supplies. It does well to insist on the omnipresence of God, and on the complete and ceaseless dependence of the universe on His power. But all true theism does the same. There is no pantheism in the Bible, yet no book is more thoroughly pervaded and inspired by the thought that finite things are not self-existent, nor self-sustained, nor self-evolved, but that God is over all and in all, the ground of existence, the source of life, the giver of every good. This thought is implied on each page. It is strikingly expressed in the words of the Psalmist when he says,—"If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me:" of the prophet,—"Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord: do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord:" of the Apostle Paul,—"For in God we live, and move, and have our being:" and of the Apostle John,—"He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." To call language of this kind pantheistic has no warrant in reason, and no other tendency than to mislead. The truth that "of God, and through Him, and to Him, are all things," is common to pantheism and theism, and distinguishes both from deism. There is more,

however, than this to be said. Pantheism is, in fact, far from teaching the full truth even as to God's presence. It cannot consistently conceive of it as a personal and spiritual, but only as a natural and necessary, presence. It tells us that God is in all that we see and touch and hear,—in the light of day, the springing grass, and whispering breeze; but it tells us too that the God who is there is present only as substance, force, and law, not as reason, love, and will. If so—if God is only thus present to us in the elements and agencies of nature,—His presence is, in reality, only their presence. It adds nothing to their presence. Were it withdrawn, if the things themselves existed, there would be no difference. Imagination and poetry may endeavour to make something of the distinction between the presence of a merely impersonal God in nature and the mere presence of nature, but I do not see how either reason or a reasonable faith, either philosophy or religion, can attach any importance to it. If the God who is in the sunbeam can only be present as its light and heat, the sunbeam without God must be equivalent to the sunbeam with God. Only when God is felt to be the creative and legislative Reason — the supreme Will, free, righteous, and loving,—can His presence in the objects and processes of nature acquire a real religious significance. If He is even only so present in ourselves that there is no dis-

tinction between Him and us, between His power and our power, His presence with us is not distinguishable from His absence from us. Another sort of presence is needed before the soul can be satisfied,—the presence of one spirit with another spirit. Religion implies, undoubtedly, that we realise God's presence with us; but it equally implies, what pantheism denies, that He is personally distinct from us; that He can have affection and compassion towards us, and that we can love Him with an unselfish love; that He can guide and help us, and that we may trust Him as we cannot trust ourselves; and that we may fear Him as one whom we can offend, and pray to Him as one who can hear and answer us.

Religion supposes faith, love, hope; but pantheism when it denies the personality of God refuses to these affections an appropriate object. It withholds from the view of the spirit what can alone satisfy its best and deepest feelings. The less of determinate personal character God is regarded as having, the less is it possible to love or trust Him. When supposed to be wholly indeterminate and impersonal, no room at all is left for a religion characterised by the personal affections. To a necessarily self-evolving impersonal God—whether conceived of as substance, identity, force, law, process, or idea—the only worship which can reasonably be offered is a cold, passionless resigna-

tion, which submits because it must, which bows not to love but to power, and which looks forward to the eternal loss of individual existence as the inevitable destination of man. The soul craves for union with God, and can have no healthy spiritual life except through union with Him; but the value, and even possibility of such union must depend not only on the disposition of man, but on the character of God. Pantheism, however, would divest God of character: it denies to Him self-consciousness, fatherly love, providential care, redeeming mercy: under pretence of exalting Him above all categories of thought and existence it reduces Him to the level of dead things, of necessary processes, of abstract ideas, or even to the still lower level of the unknowable and non-existent; and it thereby leaves no room for that union with God in rational, pure, and holy love, which is the only basis, the grand distinction, the power, and the glory of true religion. It offers to enable us to realise better than any other theory the omnipresence of God, but it represents Him as in reality inaccessible either to intelligence or affection. It keeps the word of promise to the ear, but breaks it to the heart.

History confirms what has just been said. It shows that pantheism can only find room for a religion of affectionate devotion by being untrue to its distinctive principles. The more consistent

it is, the less religious it is. In Brahminism and Buddhism we perceive how a deep sense of the evils of the present life, and a vivid fear of the evils which may be endured in the future phases of existence, may cause men to yearn intensely and to labour earnestly for the extinction of personality, or even for utter annihilation, but the absolute Being of the one system and the absolute Fate of the other are alike unloved. The mystical piety of India, when strictly pantheistic, knows nothing of the gratitude for Divine mercy and the trust in Divine righteousness which characterise evangelical piety. Instead of love and communion in love, it can only commend to us the contemplation of an object which is incomprehensible, devoid of all affections, and indifferent to all actions. When feelings like love, gratitude, and trust are expressed in the hymns and prayers of Hindu worship, it is in consequence of a virtual denial of the principles of pantheism; it is because the mind has consented to regard as real what it had previously pronounced illusory, and to personify what it had declared to be impersonal. Hinduism holds it to be a fundamental truth that the absolute Being can have no personal attributes, and yet it has not only to allow but to encourage its adherents to invest that Being with these attributes, in order that by thus tem-

porarily deluding themselves they may evoke in their hearts at least a feeble and transient glow of devotion. It has even been forced, by its inability to elicit and sustain a religious life by what is strictly pantheistic in its doctrine, to crave the help of polytheism, and to treat the foulest orgies and cruellest rites of idolatry as acts of reasonable worship paid indirectly to the sole and supreme Being. It finds polytheism to be the indispensable supplement of its pantheism. It is the personal gods of Hindu polytheism, and not the impersonal principle of Hindu pantheism, that the Hindu people worship. No people can worship what they believe to be entirely impersonal. Even in the so-called religions of nature the deified natural powers are always personified. It is only as persons that they are offered prayers and sacrifices. In lands where polytheism has been destroyed the pantheist still finds himself unable to worship mere indeterminate Being, and hence he becomes a worshipper either of humanity in general or of the individuals whom he regards as heroes. He can only conceive of his God as having reality in the progress of the human race or in the souls of great men. Says one of our modern pantheists, " The universal does not attract us until housed in an individual. Who heeds the waste abyss of possibilities? The ocean is everywhere the same, but it has no character

unless seen with the shore or the ship." In so far as pantheists, Hegel and Cousin, Carlyle and Emerson, are also hero-worshippers, man-worshippers.

I have said that the ability of pantheism to ally itself with polytheism accounts for its prevalence in certain lands; but I must add that, although a power, this ability is not a merit. It is a power for evil—a power which sustains superstition, corrupts the system which possesses it, deludes and degrades the human mind and heart, and arrests social progress. Educated Hindus are often found to represent it as an excellence of Brahminism, that it not only tolerates but embraces and incorporates the lower phases of religion. They contend that it thereby elevates and purifies polytheism, and helps the minds of men to pass from the lowest stage of religious development gradually up to the highest. The opinion may seem plausible, but neither reason nor experience confirms it. Pantheism can give support to polytheism, and receive support from it, but only at the cost of sacrificing all its claims to be a rational system, and of losing such moral virtue as it possesses. If it look upon the popular deities as mere fictions of the popular mind, its association with polytheism can only mean a conscious alliance with falsehood, the deliberate propagation of lies, a persistent career of hypocrisy. If, on the other

hand, it regard them as really manifestations of the absolute Being, it must believe this on the authority of revelation or tradition, for it is impossible to pretend that their existence and the reality of their exploits can be proved by reason. But in this case pantheism manifestly ceases to have any title to rationality. Instead of showing itself to be a system explanatory of facts, it convicts itself of being a device to give plausibility to fables. Whatever can account for what is false as easily as for what is true, cannot really account for what is true. Then, as to the testimony of experience, India alone is surely sufficient proof that the union of pantheism with polytheism does not correct but stimulate the extravagances of the latter. Pantheism, instead of elevating and purifying Hindu polytheism, has contributed to increase the number, the absurdity, and the foulness of its superstitions.

While in India pantheism has allied itself to polytheism, in Germany it has often professed to accept even the most distinctive doctrines of Christianity. Many followers of Hegel have claimed to find in the mysteries of faith the profoundest speculative truths, while utterly rejecting and despising them as presented in Scripture and by the Church. They have talked of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit; of the incarnation and atonement; of the Word and sacraments; of the resurrection and eternal life,—as if they were sincere and fer-

vent believers, and yet have been virtually atheists. The form of pantheism which they have adopted has enabled them to present their anti-religious negations in the language which had been appropriated to the expression of positive Christian tenets. It has allowed them, while discarding sacred things, to retain sacred names and venerated formulas. Now, undoubtedly, pantheism in Germany has owed much of its success to this power of assuming the aspect of the system to which it is most opposed. Through availing itself thereof it has not only commended its doctrines to some who would have been shocked by them if they had been presented without disguise, but it has been able to work an amount of harm which it could never otherwise have done, by substituting for the principles of the Gospel dogmas nominally the same but really as different as darkness from light or poison from food. But, again, it must be said that power is by no means identical with merit. Satan is only the more dangerous because he can take the form of an angel of light; and he is none the worthier of our esteem when he presents himself in this character. So pantheism will receive no credit either from truly intelligent or scrupulously honest men because of its power of seeming to be what it is not, and of explaining away or perverting what it professes to interpret and confirm.

I have admitted that pantheism, judged of from a religious point of view, ranks high above atheism. I am entitled, yea, bound, to add that it is very apt to sink down to the same low level. It has often been observed that it has throughout its whole history vacillated between atheism — the denial that there is really a God,—and acosmism—the denial that there is really a world. The reason is obvious. It can only defend its claim to have reached the knowledge of absolute unity by virtually suppressing either the infinite or the finite—by representing either nature as an illusion or God as an abstraction. This truth has been so convincingly established by M. Saisset that it would be a waste of labour to dwell upon it. Dr Liddon has presented it concisely in these words: "In conceiving of God, the choice before a pantheist lies between alternatives from which no genius has as yet devised a real escape. God, the pantheist must assert, is literally everything; God is the whole material and spiritual universe; He is humanity in all its manifestations; He is by inclusion every moral and immoral agent; and every form and exaggeration of moral evil, no less than every variety of moral excellence and beauty, is part of the all-pervading, all-comprehending movement of His universal life. If this revolting blasphemy be declined, then the God of pantheism must be the barest abstraction of

abstract being; He must, as with the Alexandrian thinkers, be so exaggerated an abstraction as to transcend existence itself; He must be conceived of as utterly unreal, lifeless, non-existent; while the only real beings are those finite and determinate forms of existence whereof 'nature' is composed. This dilemma haunts all the historical transformations of pantheism, in Europe as in the East, to-day as two thousand years ago. Pantheism must either assert that its God is the one only existing being whose existence absorbs and is identified with the universe and humanity; or else it must admit that He is the rarest and most unreal of conceivable abstractions; in plain terms, that He is no being at all."[1] If pantheism must thus sacrifice, however, either the infinite to the finite or the finite to the infinite—either God to nature or nature to God—it is not difficult to see which will be in greatest danger of being surrendered. Profoundly speculative and deeply devotional minds may refuse on any account to abandon their faith in the infinite, and be content to sacrifice the existence of the worlds of sense and consciousness; but ordinary minds will assuredly never be able to persuade themselves that all finite things, themselves included, are mere illusions and nonentities, and will, consequently, confound God with the universe—thereby resolv-

[1] Bampton Lectures for 1866—8vo ed., pp. 448, 449.

ing God as distinguished from nature into a mere notion or name.

Religion and morality are so allied, that when we treat of the relation of pantheism to one of them, we cannot leave wholly out of consideration its relation also to the other. In fact, it is precisely in its non-recognition of the moral relations on which the communion of sinful man with a holy God ought to rest that pantheism most signally fails as a religion. Through its blindness to the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man it can only elicit and sustain a piety which is exclusive of morality. It allows, yea, leads, its votaries to believe that they can be religious without caring to be righteous. It implies that all self-accusation is self-deception, since the worst passions and vilest actions of humanity are states and operations of the One Absolute Being. Man cannot be justly held responsible for what truly belongs to God—for affections or deeds which are necessarily manifestations of the Divine nature. This characteristic of pantheism has doubtless been to many an attraction. It is only too natural that those who love sin should not desire to have to do with a God who hates it. Piety without morality cannot fail to please many better than a piety which is inclusive of morality. But such a piety can never truly satisfy a living and awakened soul. Conscience is an ineradicable principle of the

human spirit; it is even the highest principle of the human spirit, because it testifies to the existence and presence of a law which is the expression of a supremely high and holy nature. There is no principle to which religion is more bound to conform and yield satisfaction, yet pantheism contradicts its most sacred and certain convictions, and directly tends to eradicate and destroy it.

Yes, pantheism is not only an inadequate religion, but it strikes at the very roots of morality, and strives to set aside its fundamental postulates. Man feels himself a free agent and responsible for his conduct. He recognises an order or law which impresses him as sacred, and he has a conviction that he can either bring his life into harmony with it or war against it. He acknowledges obligations and rights; he experiences the joys of an approving conscience, and the bitterness of remorse. The pantheist is a man, and these convictions and feelings are known to him as well as to other men; and he may, as many pantheists do, try earnestly to retain them, to do justice to them, to incorporate them into his system. But the task is a hopeless one. If evil be no less necessary or divine than good, evil must be but good in another way we are not skilled in, and neither God nor man can reasonably condemn it. If human personality and freedom are illusions, then must obligation, guilt and retribution be the absurdest

fictions. In a word, from pantheistic premisses we can only legitimately infer that "whatever is, is right," or that "might is right."

Pantheists who have had any regard to logic have never been able to reach other conclusions. The advocates of the Vedanta doctrine teach that sin is neither real in itself nor capable of reaching to what is real in man; that it is but a creation of ignorance; that "though the soul plunge itself in sin, like a sword in water, it shall in no wise cling to it;" that the distinctions of right and wrong are mere appearances which will vanish as soon as the dream-state of life is dispelled. The beautiful Bhagavad Gita distinctly teaches that what are called right actions and wrong actions are alike to God; that He may be served with evil as well as with good. It may be said that Stoicism, although a form of pantheism, was sublimely moral — a system which inspired and moulded heroic natures and nourished the noblest virtues. But it must be borne in mind that the entire morality of Stoicism rested on affirmations which no Stoic ever made even a serious attempt to reconcile either with the unity of existence or the fatalism of events. Stoic morality was rooted in the belief that reason and righteousness ruled the universe, and, above all, in the conviction that the will is outside of the sphere of fate—that it is free; that man is the absolute lord of his own actions;

that the soul is essentially above fate, and equal to Jove himself. Stoicism escaped the moral consequences of its pantheism only by disregarding speculative consistency, and asserting the most manifest contradictions with truly Roman audacity. Pass to Spinoza. He had the merit of at least making desperate efforts to attain consistency. What sort of moral creed, then, did he deduce from pantheistic principles? One which almost looks as if it had been the joint production of a Thomas a Kempis and a Thomas Hobbes, containing, as it does, along with a rule of life which is rather too good for saints so long as they are in the flesh, another which is only followed by the brutes. Spinoza was a naturally noble-minded man, and so he taught that virtue is the intellectual love of God; but he was also a pantheist and a reasoner, and therefore he taught, too, that the measure of man's right is his power and appetite; that the best right is that of the strongest. In like manner, whenever Hegelian pantheism has been fully thought out and clearly expressed, evil has been maintained to be essential to the self-manifestation of God and necessarily involved in the existence of good, might has been proclaimed to be right, success has been held to be its own sufficient justification, war has been defended on immoral grounds, and personal liberties have been despised. The whole history of panthe-

ism, in fact, teaches that no true system of ethics or politics can be based on a pantheistic foundation; that neither individuals nor societies can derive a healthy moral life from a pantheistic source.

Von Hartmann, in a celebrated but superficial book on the Religion of the Future, has asserted that theism is inconsistent with morality, since there can be no moral worth in the obedience of the will to any law which is not of its own making; and that pantheism is the true basis of morality, since it alone enables us to conceive of the will as its own law. Such statements show great want both of insight and reflection. If the will did give itself a law, its obedience to that law would be morally worthless. It cannot be reasonably imagined to be morally bound to obey a law which it has itself created, or, indeed, to be morally bound at all, unless under a law which is not of its own making. The will is not its own law, and cannot even be conceived of as its own law. To identify the will and its law is to confound entirely distinct things. For the will to rule the will, it would need at once to command and to obey, to be bond and free, dependent and independent. To be its own rule were for it the same as to be without rule. Besides, nothing can be more obvious than that pantheism does not allow us to conceive of the will as determining itself, as giving itself a law, or being a law

to itself. It makes it, on the contrary, impossible for us consistently to believe in any real self-determination or self-control as belonging to the will. Pantheism leaves no possibility of the existence of will properly so called. Let it be granted that there is true will in God or man, and pantheism cannot be maintained to be a rational theory of the universe.

It is more plausible—more correct even—to argue that pantheism ministers moral strength to men by teaching them to realise that God worketh in them and through them. By inculcating its doctrine of the immanence of God in all human thought and action, while at the same time especially insisting on the achievements of power and genius as the manifestations of the Divine agency, it has gained for itself a sympathy and exerted an influence which are far from inconsiderable. The conqueror, the philosopher, the poet, feels himself borne upwards, as it were, and along a path of glory and success, by the force of an indwelling God. The hours of highest achievement and joy are those in which man is frequently least conscious of his weaknesses and limitations as a man, and most prone to identify himself with God. Pantheism may give strength both for endurance and action, although it is more closely connected with the pride of power than with power itself. It does nothing, however, in a moral respect which a true

theism does not accomplish in a wiser and more efficacious way. Such a theism as that which underlies Christianity tells us that we may have strength from God for all our work if we only seek for it; that God is well pleased to work in every humble heart both to will and to do; and, at the same time, it does not tell us, like pantheism, that whatever we will and do is His willing and doing; that whether we pray or refrain from prayer, our work will be His work. It teaches us to trust in God for all good gifts and for grace to perform all good works; while it does not, like pantheism, make this great lesson of none effect by destroying the distinction between good and evil,—between dwelling in God and living in sin,—between being filled with the spirit of God and filled with ambition or pride or lust.

The distinction of good and evil, then, like the reality of a power of self-determination, is a barrier to pantheism. A plain man who holds fast to what his conscience testifies as to the opposition of right and wrong, will always have an adequate argument in hand against a self-consistent and thorough pantheism. For pantheism would obliterate the distinction between them, or make evil the mere absence of good or a lesser good. It cannot allow that moral good and evil are in direct and positive antagonism. It is bound to maintain that the one involves the other, and that both are

needed to complete a whole. It sees in their opposition only an instance of the dualism so abundantly exemplified by the polarities of nature,—by action and reaction, darkness and light, heat and cold, male and female, motion and rest, matter and spirit. But who that faithfully adheres to the testimony of conscience can be deceived by such a view? Must a man not be already blind to the difference between right and wrong who does not regard with profound distrust every assertion or insinuation to the effect that they are alike necessary, alike essential to the order and harmony of the universe? Will he not demand rigid proof for every assertion or insinuation of the kind? If he demand it, he will certainly not obtain it. It is easy to show that there is a rational and harmonious connection between light and darkness, heat and cold, and all the other so-called polarities of nature; that they come from the same mind, belong to the same system, and work together to the same end; that their conflicts are only apparent, while their co-operation is real. But no man has ever proved that truth and falsehood, virtue and vice, are similarly connected. Many have asserted it. None, however, have produced other evidence for it than illusory analogies, or deductions from false premisses. Conscience pronounces sin that which is not necessary—that which ought not to be. Reason declares it unreasonable, and finds

that it is never in and of itself a means to good, whatever good may spring from opposition to it. Right and wrong are absolutely exclusive of each other. There can be no compromise between them, or reconciliation of them. They cannot blend and merge into any common higher result. The one can only be satisfied by the annihilation of the other. All this pantheism is logically necessitated to deny, but in so doing dashes itself against a rock.

I might now proceed to consider the moral character of the optimism, the historical fatalism, the glorification of war, the hero-worship, and the contempt for weakness, poverty, and suffering virtue, which pantheism generates; but I have elsewhere done this so fully,[1] that I shall leave this part of my subject without further remark, and pass from where the dogma we are examining is weakest to where it is, perhaps, strongest.

It has often been observed that pantheism exercises a special attraction over æsthetic and artistic natures. It appeals more effectively to the emotional susceptibility than to the conscience. For while it refrains from representing God as a moral personality, it exults in describing Him as a plastic force which fills the universe with forms of beauty and grandeur,—the

[1] Historical Philosophy in France, pp. 452-479.

"Eternal spring
Of life and death, of happiness and woe,
Of all that chequers the phantasmal scene
That floats before our eyes in wavering light."

Now there are many minds in which the sense of beauty is stronger than the conviction of obligation,—which are more pained by the contemplation of æsthetic deformity than of moral evil,—which are repelled by the thought of God as a Governor and Judge, yet attracted by the thought of Him as the

" Soul of those mighty spheres
Whose changeless paths thro' heaven's deep silence lies;
Soul of that smallest being,
The dwelling of whose life
Is one faint April sun-gleam."

It is quite natural that such minds should be taken captive by a system which does not disturb them with admonitions about sin and retribution, pardon and grace, and holiness; but which, while adding to their interest in nature and human life, allows them to rest in the admiration of beauty as devotion to God. This is not, however, because the sense of beauty misleads in itself, or is in excess even in those who are thus deceived. The explanation of their fall is no excellence, but a defect. It is not because of the vividness and susceptibility of their æsthetic sympathies that those to whom I refer become pantheists, and adore a God who has

life and activity but no moral attributes; it is because of the comparative feebleness and deadness of their moral principles. It is not because their sense of beauty is too strong, and they are exquisitely alive to the charms of nature; but because their sense of duty is too weak, and they are strangely insensible to the hatefulness of sin and to the claims of righteousness. It is because their minds are one-sided and ill-balanced, and especially because reverence for holiness is not, as it ought to be, the central conviction of their souls. There can be, I need scarcely say, no true piety which rests on sympathy with the beautiful to the exclusion of reverence for moral excellence, or even in which æsthetic emotions are not subordinated to moral convictions. A being like man, who lives continually under moral law, cannot safely luxuriate in a mere religion of beauty.

But while this is to be kept in mind, it must also be maintained that theism, rightly apprehended, can sustain and satisfy all sensibilities to beauty not only as well as pantheism, but much better. It fully recognises the truth in virtue of which pantheism attracts æsthetic natures, although it recognises other truths as of still greater moment. Its acknowledgment of God as a personal moral Governor and Judge does not prevent its also acknowledging that He creates with plastic hand all lovely things, adorns even the desert flower, born

to blush unseen by any eye but His own, and elaborately moulds and delicately tints even the tiniest creatures in the depths of the ocean, because His own character spontaneously impels Him to make His works beautiful, and divinely to rejoice over what is beautiful. When poetry represents God as present and operative in nature —wheeling the silent spheres, shining in the sun, hurling the tempest forth, feeding and guiding His creatures, or speaking in the reason and conscience of man—some are ready to pronounce it pantheistic. They are not, however, to be commended or imitated. It is not pantheism to show forth the omnipresence of God. To say that it is, is to do gross injustice to theism. Only a theism falsely so called will refuse cordially to endorse whatever language merely helps us to realise that God fills and pervades His creation, and that in Him it lives and moves, and has its being. We must take some other view of pantheism than one which would compel us to include the psalmists and prophets of Israel, Christ and His apostles and their followers in all ages, among its expositors and adherents.

All the power, then, which pantheism possesses to satisfy the æsthetic capacities of man, theism also possesses. But it possesses far more. Behind nature it shows us not only a plastic force, but a perfect spirit. And this should increase our en-

joyment of nature—even of mere physical nature —which is beautiful to us in proportion as we perceive in it reflections of the graces of spirit. Physical things must be all the more sublime and fair for disclosing to the mind the majesty, the love, and tenderness of a perfect spirit. It is only in such a spirit that the mind can perceive an ideal of spiritual beauty. A perfectly holy spirit must be a perfectly beautiful spirit, and the system which presents to us an infinite spirit, perfect in all holy beauties, can alone completely satisfy the æsthetic mind. It necessarily and directly responds to the æsthetic no less than to the moral nature of men. It may call its disciples to work, indeed, rather than to enjoy, but the work which it prescribes is to realise a perfect ideal. It teaches to yearn for that beauty of universal holiness of which material beauty is but the shadow. The God of pantheism is no spiritual ideal, and can demand from worshippers no spiritually ideal life.

Further, pantheism, it seems to me, has a natural tendency to vitiate and destroy art by depriving it of a moral basis and moral motives. I admit that, in so far as it is antagonistic to atheism, or deism, or even a merely scholastic theism, it fosters art. Probably in all ages in which art has flourished the pantheistic spirit has been more or less influential. Yet it appears obvious that the decided predominance of pantheism, and still more

its exclusive sway, would be as fatal to art as even atheism or deism. It would lead straight to belief in the moral indifference of art, and would favour the rise and spread of merely naturalistic or sensuous schools of poetry and painting. It could not sustain the faith to which art owes its highest achievements, and which can alone maintain it in the vigour of perennial youth — the faith that "earth fills her lap with treasures not her own,"— that there is no pathos equal to that of moral conflict, and no sublimity equal to that of moral achievement,—that natural beauties are suggestive of spiritual perfections. Were our poets to breathe no finer ether than that which pantheism supplies, they might for a time give us songs of luscious sweetness and intoxicating delight, but the inevitable foulness of corruption would appear at length. It is of singers who have been inspired from a loftier and purer source that men will say—

> "Blessings be on them, and eternal praise,
> Who gave us nobler loves and nobler cares—
> The Poets, who on earth have made us heirs
> Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays."

Would pantheism not lead painters into such an æsthetic and ethical heresy as that their highest achievements were to be won through the representation of mere nature, or even of mere nudity? And were any such heresy to become general; were our painters not to remember that they have

higher work to do than to portray the unripe graces of a Cupid, or the sensuous charms of a Venus; should they fail to realise that to become truly great in their profession they must be able to understand and interpret what is spiritually and morally significant, and that, consequently, they must possess, along with other gifts, the power of spiritual and moral vision,—then, assuredly, the painter's noble art would soon become degraded in the unworthy hands of those who professed to cultivate it.

II.

We have now seen how pantheism is related to religion, to morality, and to art. Let us further consider how it is related to thought itself, or to what is called philosophy,—*i.e.*, thought at its best —the highest thought on the highest themes.

Pantheism has always exerted a powerful attraction on speculative intellects. It has drawn not a few of the ablest of them closely and entirely to itself. The secret of its power over them is not difficult to discover. Pantheism professes to have reached what philosophy aspires to attain. It claims to know and to make known the one principle from which all dependent existence is logically and necessarily derived,—the one principle to know which is to know everything. It pretends

to have reached an absolute unity from which it can show how the entire worlds of existence and of knowledge have been evolved. Now all philosophy strives after unity. It is its aim, its task, to reduce complexity to simplicity, the many to the one. It is not to be wondered at if it should often imagine that its dream has been realised; if it should be ready to believe that its desires have been fulfilled.

The search after absolute knowledge has ended with many in their acquiescence in some form of pantheism. The search itself is inevitable, for its cause lies in the very nature of knowledge. It has been truly enough said that "to know is to limit;" and yet nothing is more characteristic of knowledge than that it is impossible to assign to it any external or objective limits. There are few propositions, perhaps, which more need to be thoughtfully appreciated than just this,—*The only ascertainable limitations of reason in the investigation of truth are those which are inherent in its own constitution.* Reason has its limits in its own laws. It is the business of psychology and logic to discover what these laws are. When they are known the powers of reason are known, because reason can never claim to be irrational. It is useless, however, to attempt to mark off the external or objective boundaries of rational research; useless to attempt to draw a line in the outward universe, beyond which all will be a *terra incognita,*

and within which all is explicable. There is absurdity—self-contradiction—in the very attempt. To draw a line separating the knowable from the unknowable we must have already done what we affirm to be impossible,—known the unknowable. We cannot draw a boundary unless we see over it. There can be no within for us where there is no without. We can set no limit to anything if we know that there is nothing beyond it. We cannot say that any fact or doctrine whatever is in itself, or in its own nature, unknowable; because to have a right to say this we should require to know it in itself or in its own nature; and if we could know it thus, it manifestly could not be unknowable. There can, in fact, be nothing unknowable in itself, —nothing unknowable for reason in itself. There can be no other unknowable for reason than the irrational or self-contradictory—which is to say, there is nothing really unknowable, since the irrational or self-contradictory is known as that in which there is nothing to know. Thus in all knowledge there is not only limitation, but comprehension of what is within, and apprehension of what is without, the limit. And the apprehension which transcends limitation while implying it, can never be absorbed into or exhausted by the comprehension which is defined by limitation while implying the unlimited. The apprehension of the unlimited, thus accompanying, in every act

of knowledge, the comprehension of the limited, forces on the mind at every moment the consciousness that beyond the little which we comprehend there is always more to be comprehended. A consciousness, generally unreflective, of the relationship of the finite to the infinite, as thus implied in the very nature of knowledge, is the profoundest and most powerful stimulus to the continuous and indefinite progress of knowledge. But is there any wonder that it should, in certain minds, lead not only to progress, but to discontent with such progress as they find themselves capable of making? To feel one's self at every step as if in contact with the infinite, and yet to be able to grasp only some small fragment of the finite; to be always haunted by the absolute, yet always to come clearly face to face merely with the relative; to pursue what one never exactly reaches; to find that in no direction has our labour an assignable end,—is apt to become painful, and especially painful to those who are most given to reflection, and most possessed by the craving for truth. What can be more natural than that some of those who thus suffer should not only seek relief by endeavouring to attain to a distinct and independent knowledge of the absolute and unconditional ground of all derivative existences and secondary truths, but succeed in persuading themselves that they had found both this relief and this knowledge? There will always be

some to whom the hope of an absolute science, such as pantheism promises, will be the most seductive that can be presented.

If this hope had been less seductive—if the promise, "Your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods," had not been to certain minds a very powerful temptation,—the essential futility of pantheism must have been long ago recognised. Unless strongly biassed in its favour, men could not have failed to see that it is as little fitted to satisfy the intellect as to satisfy the heart and conscience. History of itself would have shown them this. It exhibits pantheism as bearing on its very face the most suspicious marks of illegitimacy. For pantheism has appeared only in a succession of disconnected, or very loosely connected, systems, which do not supplement, but contradict, one another. In all its purer and more self-consistent forms it has been no more than the private doctrine of some individual philosopher, or of a little school of persons who have consented to accept him as an authority. No school of the kind has flourished long, owing to the arbitrariness and incoherence characteristic of all pantheistic creeds. What a contrast does pantheism present in this respect to theism, the history of which is a single, uninterrupted, ever-progressive, ever-expanding movement! Pantheism is a sporadic and contracted phenomenon; theism is permanent and

comprehensive. The former has at particular sea sons given satisfaction for a short time to individuals and parties; the latter has been an unfailing strength and joy to all classes of men in all ages.

It is not difficult to perceive reasons why pantheism should not have been more to humanity than what history shows it to have been. It is because it has radical defects, which bring it into necessary conflict with reason. It goes fatally astray at the very outset. The absolute unity which it seeks is a mere delusion, a mere dream. There is no path either to it or from it. The absolute unity as conceived of by pantheism is something entirely indeterminate — something which has no distinctive characteristics, and of which, prior to its self-manifestation or development, nothing can be definitely affirmed or denied —yet which, by an inherent necessity, progressively determines itself, and evolves out of itself all distinctions and all definite objects, so as to constitute the whole universe of being and thought, the infinite and the finite, the necessary and the contingent, the material and the spiritual. But this unity is a mere idol of the mind. Belief in it is intellectual idolatry. The hope of ever reaching it is consummate folly.

The absolute unity of pantheism has been conceived of in all sorts of ways, but, no matter how conceived of, diversity, multiplicity, the actual uni-

verse as we know it, has ever been derived from it only by surreptitiously dealing with it as if it were the opposite of what it is pretended to be—as if it were not absolutely one, but, on the contrary, as multiple and complex as what is deduced from it. And it could not be otherwise, because from absolute unity nothing but absolute unity can come, or rather absolutely nothing can come.

There are pantheists who have sought absolute unity in a material principle, and who have constructed systems of what is called materialistic pantheism. Such pantheism is essentially identical with materialism; and every objection which applies to materialism at all tells against it in the form of materialistic pantheism. Order, life, mind, and morality are all facts as unexplained by materialism when professing to be monism as when confessing itself to be multitudinism. For it is the profession which is erroneous, and the confession which is correct. Unity can never be reached by materialistic pantheism, nor can variety ever be explained by it. For—as I had occasion to insist when discussing materialism—there is no real oneness known, or even conceivable, in matter. The purest physical element is no real unity, but a plurality or aggregation of parts, each of which is as much a unity as the whole. Every particle of the purest physical element is distinct from every other. And no single absolutely pure physical

element can be imagined as producing an element different in kind from itself. Such production would be absolute creation, and creation without a cause. Further, matter absolutely one must be matter which is entirely indeterminate. But there is no evidence for the existence of such matter. The only reasons ever produced for belief in its existence have been worthless metaphysical subtilties. And if it did exist, it would explain exceedingly little. Far from accounting for or dispensing with mind, it would at every step imply and demand it. Plato and Aristotle convinced themselves that the material universe must have an uncreated basis, called by the former "nurse" and "receptacle," and by the latter "first-timber" and "the underlying;" but both had the perspicacity to see that such ultimate matter could at the most be merely a condition and possibility of things; that it must receive reality, forms, and attributes from an eternal and active Reason; that to suppose it to give rise to definite objects and organisms, and finally to generate intelligence, was an opinion which no thoughtful mind could entertain.

There are pantheists who have sought the absolute unity in physical force, and who have constructed systems of dynamical pantheism. They, too, have searched and laboured in vain. Mere force is as unintelligible as mere matter. Is there

a force which is the force of no being or thing? If there is not, clearly the absolute cannot be in mere force; and I am not aware that any person has shown that there is—that there can be action without an agent. And if it were proved, absolute unity would be far from reached. Every physical force is necessarily divisible force, and has, therefore, no strict essential unity. And a physical force strictly one in kind can no more produce diversity than can a single physical element. It may be supposed to have a law within it necessitating action, and that law must be in it all, and must necessitate everywhere the same action, a dreary monotony of change, out of which no variety can come.

There are pantheists who have conceived of the absolute unity under the similitude of organic life. To them the universe has presented itself as a vast organism, everywhere instinct with a self-developing vitality. But surely there can be neither unity nor absoluteness in a life which is inseparable from physical conditions, confined within organic limits, and which grows like a plant or an animal. Anthropomorphism may be a poor theory, but it must be better than phytomorphism or zoomorphism. To conceive of the absolute after the analogy of a plant or a beast may be poetical, but it is so plainly irrational as to call for no discussion.

None but superficial thinkers, however, have believed that the type of absolute unity was to be found in the physical or organic world. The material, the dynamical, and the organic forms of pantheism have only had admirers among those in whose minds speculation is in its infancy. Elevated and comprehensive intellects, when they have unhappily adopted pantheism, have almost always become metaphysical pantheists. Let us look, therefore, at the central ideas of some of the metaphysical forms of pantheism.

There is a pantheism which places absolute unity in absolute being, and which represents the worlds of sense and of consciousness as illusions. Finding that it cannot explain variety by unity, it sacrifices variety to unity, so far as it is possible for the human mind to do this. It maintains that there is no real being but one, and that all the objects of ordinary experience, and all the distinctions of the common understanding, are illusions. This has been the doctrine of men of great speculative genius, and is as consistent a theory of pantheism as has yet been devised. On at least two grounds, however, it may, I think, be safely pronounced a failure. First, it admits that besides the one real being there are appearances or illusions. But even appearances or illusions are phenomena which require to be explained. And

they cannot be explained on the hypothesis of absolute unity. They imply that besides the absolute being there are minds which can be haunted by appearances, and which can be deluded into believing that these appearances are realities. Secondly, the pantheism which maintains that there is no being except one, is under the necessity of allying itself with a scepticism which will not allow it to maintain that there is even one being. It is only by the help of a scepticism which denies the validity of the primary perceptions and fundamental laws of mind, that it can undertake to show that plurality, time, and change are illusions. But such scepticism is a very dangerous associate. It is as ruinous to any one system which professes to be a system of truth as to any other; and no one system can legitimately make use of it against another. If philosophical scepticism be conclusive, the positive assertions of pantheism must all be arbitrary. If we may not believe in plurality, neither may we believe in unity. If we may deny that time exists, notwithstanding that it is a necessary condition of thought, we may equally deny that eternity exists, since we can give no other reason for our belief in the existence of eternity than for our belief in the existence of time.

There is another pantheism which, instead of

sacrificing, like the one just mentioned, all variety to unity, endeavours to find an absolute unity which includes all variety. It rejects the view that God and the world, mind and matter, are substantially distinct, and maintains that there is but one substance—"that which exists in itself and is conceived by itself, or, in other words, that the conception of which does not require the conception of anything else antecedent to it." Infinite extension and infinite thought are represented by it as simply attributes of this substance, and all minds and bodies as modes of these attributes. It thus traces the material and mental worlds back into a single all-comprehensive substance. This is the kind of pantheism which was expounded with so much genius by Spinoza. There are many objections to it, but I have only to indicate here that what it proclaims to be absolute unity is nothing of the kind. For, first, this substance, although it can be conceived *per se*, still must be conceived. It is an object of thought, and only affirmed to exist in virtue of being an object of thought. The existence of substance is implied in the essence of substance as part of its idea; such is the reason given for asserting the existence of substance. But if so, we have obviously here not one thing but two things—substance and the idea of substance—and the first is last and the last first. These two cannot be fused into one. The idea of substance

cannot be resolved into the substance itself, seeing that, apart from the idea, there is no warrant for belief in the existence of substance; nor can substance itself be resolved into its idea, since it is admitted that there may be in the substance itself an infinity of attributes of which we have no idea, and since, if substance be reducible to, or convertible with its idea, the pantheism of substance must be false, and must give place to absolute idealism. Secondly, substance cannot be known *per se*, but only through properties which are in relation to the minds that know them. Nothing can be known unless it has qualities which can be apprehended. But if this be the case, the attributes and modes of substance are its aspects towards minds, and hence substance, instead of explaining and comprehending minds, implies and presupposes them. Thirdly, if we waive the objection just stated, and grant that the attributes of substance are objectively and essentially in the substance itself, manifestly the substance can no longer be thought of as an absolute unity, but only as an aggregation of distinct essences. When Spinoza maintained that extension and thought were eternally and essentially, but not substantially, distinct, he was obviously granting a real duality and affirming a merely nominal unity.

There is another pantheism which, perceiving the defects of the foregoing theory, places absolute

unity in the absolute identity of subject and object, of the ideal and the real, of spirit and nature. It holds spirit and nature to be fundamentally the same—spirit being invisible nature, and nature visible spirit—and refers both back to a principle which transcends yet comprehends them, which originates and constitutes the spheres both of thought and being, and by its self-evolution forms the entire universe into an organic whole. This is the central idea in the pantheism of Schelling. It is not one, I think, which will bear examination. For, in the first place, what it affirms to be the absolute is really a process of development, or at least something subject to growth—something which advances from lower to higher, from worse to better. But surely everything of the kind, whether viewed in itself or as a process, or at its latest and most definite stage as a product, must be finite and relative. Infinity and progress, absoluteness and development, are mutually exclusive ideas. Secondly, the identity of subject and object is a self-contradictory phrase and conception. It is like the identity of black and white, odd and even, male and female; in other words, it is an alleged instance of the identity of correlatives. But just in so far as there is identity there is not correlation, and in so far as there is correlation there is not identity. Thirdly, the human mind cannot form the least

notion of a self-identical subject-object. All consciousness involves the dualism of subject and object. It is only realised as a relation. The terms of the relation may be self and a modification of self, for the object is not necessarily apart from or out of the *Ego;* but wherever there is consciousness there is relation, and wherever there is relation there is dualism. Consciousness can no more transcend the dualism of subject and object than a man can get away from himself. Fourthly, if there be such an absolute as is alleged, the knowledge of its existence must be identical with its existence. In the apprehension of the absolute subject-object there must be no distinction between knowing and being. But this implies that the knowledge of the absolute is not only unlike any knowledge of which we are conscious, but is knowledge of which we cannot possibly be conscious—knowledge which annihilates our consciousness at the moment that it identifies us with God. Schelling admitted that his absolute could only be apprehended by a very peculiar and indescribable act. Certainly any description he gave of it was peculiarly unintelligible and absurd, as has been shown in a masterly manner by Sir Wm. Hamilton in his essay on the Philosophy of the Unconditioned. I am aware that the correctness of Sir Wm. Hamilton's representation has been challenged, and the relevancy of his

criticism denied, by a writer who has made an earnest special study of the works of Schelling;[1] but I cannot find that any essential inaccuracy has been shown to exist in Sir William's account, although it may be granted to be incomplete; while his criticism would, it seems to me, remain substantially applicable, even if the rival but not really contradictory version as to what Schelling taught were adopted. Finally, if the existence of a unity of the sort imagined be granted to be known, it must still be explained how the subject and object, with their various stages and phases, have been produced by and from it. This is a task which has not been successfully accomplished. The attempts made by Schelling to *construe*, as he called it, from the absolute principle even the possible world, were quite fanciful. He himself confessed that he was wholly unable to explain by it the actual world, or even to show that there was real existence. He spent his later life in labouring to build up a theistic system to supplement this rather serious defect in his earlier philosophy.

Many pantheists failing to find a satisfactory type of unity either in physical nature or in a sphere common to matter and mind, have en-

[1] See the paper on "Schelling's Life and Letters" in the 'Fortnightly Review,' Nov. 1, 1870; and that on "Mr G. H. Lewes on Schelling and Hegel" in the 'Contemporary Review,' Sept. 1872, by Mr J. S. Henderson.

deavoured to discover it in mind itself; while they still refuse to accept the view that a perfect and personal spirit can alone account for the universe. Hence we have a class of pantheisms based on such conceptions as a universal Me, an absolute Idea, and unconditioned Will, &c. These forms of pantheism may be called psychical pantheisms, in order to distinguish them from those which I have designated physical and metaphysical.

There is a pantheism which describes the absolute principle as a universal Ego which comprehends every particular Ego—a pure Me which transcends yet manifests itself in every empirical Me—a free and active Selfhood (*Ichheit*) which posits the physical world as not-self, and objectifies itself in the moral order of the world. But this Ego or Me is, we are told, not a person; it becomes conscious only in individuals, and has no existence apart from the world which it originates. God is merely another name for the moral order of the world. What are we to think of this view, which was made famous by Fichte? What I think of it is that he who accepts it must be very easily satisfied. The very notion of a universal Ego—of an Ego which is no Ego in particular, and yet which is every particular Ego—is an arbitrary and absurd mental fiction. What cannot know itself to be a self—what cannot say Me in contradistinction to Thee—has no right to be

thought or spoken of as an Ego or Me. All that is real in the so-called universal Ego is the multiplicity of definite individuals in which it is alleged to attain consciousness. The pure Me is affirmed to be not a person, and to have no self-consciousness, no knowledge of itself or in itself. That is, of course, so much the more reason for denying it to be a Me at all. If impersonal and unconscious it may be an entity or a fiction—some sort of thing or some sort of abstraction—but it must certainly be something far too mean and poor to be called an Ego. It comes to consciousness, it is said, in each empirical Ego. But this assertion must be distinctly denied. If the pure Ego is not conscious of itself in itself, neither is it conscious of itself in the empirical Ego. The empirical Ego is conscious only of its own self. Consciousness, in fact, knows nothing of a universal unconscious Ego. If we grant the existence of such an Ego, the worlds of consciousness and perception must still be shown to be derivable from it. In this part of his task Fichte is admitted on all hands to have utterly failed. The physical world, indeed, he hardly even attempted to explain; he sought rather to explain it away.

Shall we adopt, then, Hegel's theory of the absolute? He reduced everything to thought, and deduced everything from thought. The material and the moral world, nature and his-

tory, science, art, and religion, are, according to him, but stages of an idea, apart from which they have no existence, by the movement of which they are constituted, and through which they are formed into an organic and logical whole. Hegel professes to give us a philosophy demonstrated from beginning to end, as it starts with the absolute first—the simplest notion of reason—pure being—and thence derives all knowledge and evolves all reality in a continuous process of reasoning from abstract and implicit to concrete and explicit, everywhere determined by the principle of the identity of contraries. Vast ingenuity was shown in the elaboration and application of this notion, but I have only to do with the general notion itself, which need not detain us long, since it involves all that is most objectionable in the view of Schelling which we have already given reasons for rejecting. It represents the absolute reality, for example, as the result or completion of a process of development. This is of itself enough to warrant its condemnation. An absolute which is either in the course of being developed or which has been developed is sheer nonsense, but unfortunately it is also nonsense of a kind which leads very easily to monstrous blasphemies. Hegelianism has never been able to show that the only idea of God compatible with its principles is not that of a God gradually evolved from unconsciousness to consciousness, and

thence onwards to the height of the wisdom of Hegel. Then, Hegel's view, like Schelling's, proceeds throughout on the assumption of the identity of thought and being—a position which ought not to be assumed but proved, and which is nowhere proved. Can it be proved? Is it true? No. Whatever is known is, and whatever is may be known—infinite knowledge must be coextensive with infinite existence—but that knowing and being are identical is what by no effort of mind can be rationally conceived or believed. Further, Hegel, although he starts with a conception which allows him to treat his thoughts as things, can only seem to explain the evolution of things by making absurdity the essence of reason and the principle of demonstration. He calmly tells us that ordinary and formal logic—those principles and processes of reasoning to which we owe all the discoveries of science and all the inventions of art—cannot explain the concrete, and that the true philosopher must disregard such logical laws as the axioms of identity and contradiction, and substitute for them the identity of contradictories. In other words, he undertakes to demonstrate his system, but on condition that we accept as good reasonings what sane judgment pronounces to be bad arguments. He professes to explain the generation of God, man, and nature, from the pure being which is equivalent to pure nothing; but

it is on the assumption that contradiction is the essence of existence and of reason. Well, no doubt, pure nothing as mother, and pure absurdity as father, might be expected to beget a remarkable family, and have done so in the discoveries of Hegelianism. But true reason can, I fear, have nothing to do either with the parents or their children, It must still continue to recognise *Ex nihilo nihil fit* as an axiom, and to withhold its admiration from contradictions. It may be added that true reason must treat impersonal thought—thought without a thinker—and unconscious thought, or thought of which consciousness is only an accident — an acquisition attained in man—as unthinkable thought, a highly ridiculous kind of thought, closely akin to the pure being which is pure nothing, yet possesses the power of becoming everything.

Since Hegel's time pantheism has decidedly gone from bad to worse. Hegel placed the absolute unity in reason and sought to deduce everything from reason, although he unfortunately mistook unreason for reason ; but those who have come after him have openly likened the absolute to what is devoid of reason in us—to blind Will (Schopenhauer), to the Unconscious (Von Hartmann), to the Irrational (Bahnsen), &c. Thus they have transformed pantheism into atheism and pessimism. This is what pantheism has developed into ;

and one is at a loss to conceive what can come next. Beyond pessimism and the glorification of unreason there would seem to be nothing but nihilism and the worship of the Devil. I have elsewhere, however, said perhaps enough about the views of the absolute given by the pessimistic forms of pantheism.

I may reaffirm, then, that the pretended absolute unity of pantheism always turns out, when critically examined, to be a unity merely in name, and otherwise to be an idol of the imagination, or at least a thoroughly inadequate explanation of the universe. The fact that such unity, just because arbitrary and fictitious, can be conceived of, however, in a great variety of ways, is one of the main sources of the strength and permanence of pantheism speculatively considered. The system is a very Proteus. In any one form it is weak ; but when worsted in one form it can readily appear in another, and the struggle must be renewed. Or, to change the figure, it is an enemy which is neither strong in attack nor in direct defence, but which is skilled in the art of retreat and possessed of numerous cities of refuge. None of these cities stands a long siege ; but when one of them is taken the conqueror has often the mortification of seeing another behind it, where his old enemy is blowing trumpets and waving flags, as if he had been gaining a victory instead of suffering a defeat.

Belief in pantheistic unity is, if my argumentation has been valid, intellectual idolatry. It is an idolatry which requires us to make the most enormous and costly sacrifices. Let us consider for a moment what some of these are. First, then, all the arguments employed by theism to show the existence of a God of wisdom and righteousness must be discarded. These arguments are as relevant against pantheism as against atheism. Now, of course, no one can reasonably object to their rejection after refutation, but we are bound to insist that they be not rejected until they are refuted,—that they be proved and not assumed to be inconclusive. With our reasons for belief in a living personal God the belief itself must necessarily be abandoned, and instead of a Father, Judge, and Redeemer, we must be content with some so-called Absolute which neither knows itself nor cares for us. What a wretched exchange! And with loss of belief in a personal God we must lose all the hopes and assurances attached to that belief, and become burdened with all the consequences which flow from its denial. I shall not attempt to transcribe the dismal balance-sheet.

Further, pantheism by affirming the identity of thought and existence calls on us to sacrifice all objects of thought which cannot be conceived of otherwise than as distinct from thought, and which

must be first presented to the mind before they can be represented by it; while, by referring the phenomena of matter and of mind to one substance, it requires us either to sacrifice both to an indeterminate existence which cannot be apprehended nor even imagined, or at least to sacrifice the one to the other. But we cannot make sacrifices of this kind without being necessitated to make others which are perhaps still greater. If we hold fast to the indeterminate, and persist in evolving from it both the material and mental worlds, we must have another organ of apprehension than ordinary men, and employ a different sort of logic than that of the common understanding. Our minds must have intuitions and processes which are entirely superhuman—a knowledge which transcends consciousness, and a dialectic which is independent of the laws of thought. If, on the other hand, we suppress either matter or mind, it can only be by an application of scepticism which we are logically bound to repeat and to generalise until no object or faculty continues to be acknowledged as trustworthy. Pantheism inevitably involves either mysticism or scepticism; and both mysticism and scepticism mean the sacrifice, the suicide of reason.

Then it requires us also to regard as delusive the consciousness which each man possesses of being a self or person. Whoever knows himself as

a self, a person, knows that he is not a mere part of God or of any other being; he knows himself as different from God and from every other being. The self-consciousness which is in each man cannot at once be his own proper self-consciousness and the self-consciousness which has been acquired by God. Self-consciousness is single, not dual. But there are millions on millions of self-conscious beings or persons in the world. And pantheism, in order to adhere to its dogma of absolute unity, must contradict the testimony borne by the consciousness of all these beings. It is logically bound to affirm that each of them is under a delusion when he supposes himself to be truly a self or person. But what does this imply? Why, that from true persons, really distinct from all other beings—free, responsible, moral—it must reduce and degrade them to mere semblances; for with personality, their freedom of will, responsibility, duty, must be likewise sacrificed. I should have to dwell long on this if I were to attempt to exhibit the various particulars which are involved, and therefore I must be content with the mere general declaration that pantheistic unity can only be attained at the cost of the abandonment of all the fundamental moral convictions and spiritual aspirations of humanity.

It is only an intellectual idol like the pantheistic unity which can demand sacrifices so numerous

and enormous. It demands them just because it is an intellectual idol—a false unity—a unity of a kind which can never be legitimately attained. We cannot but recognise both the finite and the infinite, the relative and the absolute, the contingent and the necessary; but we cannot by the utmost effort of reason reduce them to one absolute essence from which the whole universe of thought and being may be shown to have necessarily proceeded.

The highest unity to which the finite mind can rise is, it seems to me, the unity of a single creative intelligent Will—the one infinite personal God of theism. To this unity all multiplicity may be traced back. It is no abstract and dead unity, but one which is real, which is all-comprehensive, which fully explains both the unity and variety of the universe, and which fully satisfies at once the demands of the intellect and the heart; for it is a unity which contains the infinite fulness of power, wisdom, and love. It is an absolute unity in the only sense in which that phrase conveys an intelligible and credible meaning—that is to say, it is one Being which is self-existent and self-sufficient, which is entirely independent of every other being, and possessed in itself of every excellence in an infinite measure; while it is the sole and free source of all finite excellence. Whatever the pantheist describes as an absolute unity must be one and absolute in some way much

inferior to this. The unity of matter, the unity of force, the unity of all that is unconscious and impersonal, is unessential and derivative, yea, even illusory if separated from the underlying and original unity of a self-active mind. Only that which says "I" cannot be divided or supposed to be divided; and that which says "I," while absolutely indivisible, may possess an infinite wealth of powers and properties. The absoluteness of an infinite which necessarily originates the finite is a relative and dependent absoluteness; it is the absoluteness of a being which is not self-sufficient —which is as dependent on what it produces as that which it produces is dependent on it—which is necessarily related to the finite—which, although an infinite that is necessarily and completely active, has only a finite result. This is a curious absoluteness; or rather, it is a manifest absurdity which involves the negation of the principle of causality and of every other principle of rational thought. The theist keeps free from it. God is absolute in the view of the theist, because He alone is self-dependent and self-complete—because He stands in necessary relation to nothing finite, and yet can constitute and enter into all relations with the finite, which He chooses, and which are consistent with His intrinsic perfections. According to theism, whatever is, and is not God, is a creature of God, and no creature of God has, like God,

necessary existence. According to theism, God is the one necessary Being, and He being self-sufficient, needs no other beings in order to realise perfect self-consciousness or to secure perfect blessedness. This seems to me a much more consistent and satisfactory view of absoluteness than that of the pantheist.

It must be admitted, of course, that from the unity to which theism refers us, an absolute science such as pantheism promises cannot possibly be deduced. Alike the infinity and the freedom of the single supreme will make it impossible that a finite mind should so comprehend it as to be able logically to determine its decisions and acts. In the very knowing, indeed, that there is a God, we know that He is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in His power, wisdom, and holiness; but this knowledge of His general attributes can never justify our pretending to specify what must be His particular doings, or to maintain more than that none of His doings will be found to be unworthy of His character. The finite mind may legitimately convince itself that there is an infinite mind, but it can never so comprehend such a mind as to be capable of speculatively deducing what it can or must or will do. Absolute science is the science of an infinite reason, and not the science which can be attained by a creature like man; it is knowledge in which there is no distinction be-

tween comprehension and apprehension—in which there is no imperfection or incompleteness—on which there can be no alteration, and to which there can be no addition,—and therefore it is knowledge necessarily and for ever beyond the reach of all finite intelligences. "Who by searching can find out God? Who can find out the Almighty unto perfection?"

Pantheism stumbles at the idea of creation. It affirms that creation is inconceivable, and infers that it is impossible. In treating of materialism, I have indicated that the assertion is equivocal and the inference illegitimate. But another argument has been employed. The idea of the creation of a finite universe in time has been pronounced dishonouring to God, as implying that His omnipotence is to a large extent inoperative. What, we are asked, was Omnipotence doing before creation? How and why did infinite power produce only a finite effect? Is power unused not power wasted? Is there not something irrational and repellent in the thought of an omnipotence which originates only a limited sum of results—which has no adequate operation or object? To break or avoid the force of these questions some theologians have maintained that God does all that He can—that His activity is the full expression of His ability; and others have argued that nature is an eternal and infinite creation. These are views, however, which,

far from warding off pantheism, inevitably tend to it; and they grievously offend against reason, which declares it an absurdity that even an infinite power should produce an infinite effect within a finite sphere—within limits of time and space. Is, then, omnipotence never fully exercised? Is infinite power never fully productive? We have no right to think so. Although omnipotence cannot express itself fully in the finite world to which we belong, the Divine nature may be in itself an infinite universe where this and all other attributes can find complete expression. Is either God's power or His activity to be measured exclusively by the production or support of beings distinct from Himself? If so, obviously, unless His power be perpetually and completely exercised about finite things, His activity is not equal to His power, and He is not infinitely active, but only infinitely capable of acting. Even infinite activity, however, and absolutely infinite production, cannot be reasonably denied to the Divine nature. As activity is a perfection, infinite activity may be reasonably held to be a supreme perfection which must be ascribed to God. If an absolutely infinite agent acts according to all the extent of its absolutely infinite nature, it must necessarily produce an absolutely infinite effect; the effect would not otherwise be proportionate to the cause. The production of an absolutely infinite effect must be

a far greater perfection than the creation of any number of finite effects, and the mind may feel constrained to refer such production to God. So be it. But must the infinite effect fall within the realm of contingency, of time, of space? Must it not, on the contrary, belong to the sphere of the essential, the eternal, the absolute? Must it not lie *within* instead of *without* the Godhead? Must it not be such an effect as theologians mean when they speak of *the eternal generation* of the Word or *the eternal procession* of the Holy Spirit? It cannot, I think, be such an effect as external creation. God can never find or produce without Himself an object equal to Himself and fully commensurate with His essential, necessary activity and love. The Divine nature must have in itself a plenitude of power and glory to which the production of numberless worlds can add nothing.

Any difficulties not merely verbal and manifestly superficial which pantheists have raised as to the nature of the Divine personality likewise lead, I believe, to the conclusion, not that we should reject theism, but that we should reverence and appreciate more highly the Christian doctrine of the Trinity — a mystery indeed, yet one which explains many other mysteries, and which sheds a marvellous light on God, on nature, and on man. I have appealed, however, throughout this course of lectures, only to reason; and I am quite willing

that my arguments against pantheism and all other anti-theistic theories, as well as my arguments on behalf of theism, should be judged of by reason alone, without my reference to revelation.

I now bring these lectures to a close. It is with the trust that they may not have been wholly unprofitable to you, or unaccompanied by the blessing of God. To His name be honour and glory for ever. Amen.

APPENDIX.

NOTE I., page 3.

THE TERMS THEISM, DEISM, ATHEISM, AND ANTI-THEISM.

THERE is considerable uncertainty as to the derviation of *theós*, the term from which comes theism. Herodotus (ii. 52) traces it to *tithénai*, to place or set. The Pelasgians, he says, did not give particular names to their gods, but "called them *theoi*, because of having placed (*thentes*) all things in order." Were this etymology correct, the recognition of order was what moved the Pelasgians to designate the objects of their worship *theoi*. On this supposition the Greek name for God was an immediate creation of the teleological principle—an expression or deposit of the design argument. Herodotus believed it to be so.

Plato (Cratylus, xvi. 397) derives *theós* from *theein*, to run. He represents Socrates as saying that "the first men connected with Greece considered those only as gods, whom many of the barbarians at present regard as such,—the sun, and the moon, and the earth, and the

stars, and the heavens. Now as they perceived all these moving and running round in a perpetual course, from this nature of running they called them gods (ἀπο ταύτης τῆς φύσεως τῆς τοῦ θεῖν θεοὺς αὐτοὺς ἐπονομάσαι); but afterwards, perceiving that there were others, they called them all by the same name."

When the philological importance of Sanscrit began to be realised, the derivations of the term from Greek fell into disfavour, and it was almost universally supposed to have come from the root *div* (shining), like the Sanscrit *deva*, Latin *deus*, *divus*, and the Greek *Zeus*. This derivation is now, however, rejected by some of the highest authorities. Schleicher went back to the etymology suggested by Plato; Hainebach has defended that given by Herodotus; and Curtius inclines to derive from a root θες (to beseech). Fick decides in favour of a Sanscrit root *dhi*, to shine, to look, to be pious. If the last of these views be correct, the root thought of *theos* and *deus* is the same, although each has had its own root-word. It seems certain that they cannot have grown out of the same verbal root.

Deism is distinguished from theism by probably all recent theologians in substantially the same manner. Some oppose it to theism; others include it in theism as a species in a genus; but this does not prevent their agreeing as to the distinction to be drawn. Deism is regarded as, in common with theism, holding, in opposition to atheism, that there is a God, and, in opposition to pantheism, that God is distinct from the world, but as differing from theism in maintaining that God is separate from the world, having endowed it with self-sustaining and self-acting powers, and then abandoned it to itself. Writing of my previous volume, Mr Bradlaugh

(Nat. Ref., Jan. 6, 1878) says: "You draw a distinction between deism and theism (p. 91), for which I am not aware that there is any warranty. Surely both deist and theist mean precisely the same—viz., believer in 'Deus,' 'Theos,' 'God.' You may have any qualifying words to express the character of the belief, as Christian Theism, or Mahommedan Theism, but I do not understand that the use of the Latin or Greek form conveys, or ought to convey, any different or distinguishable meaning." In reply, I would observe that the distinction is not at all of my drawing, but one made use of by all contemporary Christian apologists. The distinction is, further, a real distinction, yet one which, so far as I know, there is no suitable qualifying word to express. Terms like Christian and Mohammedan certainly do not, as they merely characterise different forms of theism proper, or at least of theism as distinguished from deism. On this account it seems to me that the distinction would have been warranted even had the etymology of deism and theism been the same, whereas this is, as has been already indicated, extremely doubtful.

At the same time it must be admitted that the word "deist," when used in the manner indicated, may occasion injustice. It may be confounded—and in fact often is confounded—with a different application of the term, —with what may be called its historical application. Christian apologists, as a rule, when speaking of the so-called "English deists," represent them as having denied that God was present and active in the laws of nature. This is erroneous and unfair. One or two of them may have done so, but certainly what as a body they denied was merely that God worked otherwise than through natural laws. It is curious that the orthodox writers

who first unjustly accused the deists of representing God as having withdrawn from His universe, and abandoned it to its own resources, have frequently the same charge now brought against themselves. It is very common, for instance, to find Paley and other natural theologians of the eighteenth century censured as having imagined that God made the universe as a watchmaker makes a watch, and then left it to itself, merely looking on to see how it goes. Of course the censure has no foundation whatever, and only shows discreditable carelessness and ignorance in those who pronounce so unjust a judgment.

The terms atheism and anti-theism have been otherwise distinguished than they are in the lecture. Anti-theism has sometimes been understood as not a more but a less general term than atheism—as, in fact, a species or division of atheism. For instance, Dr Chalmers (Nat. Theol., ch. ii. p. 59) writes thus: "Judging from the tendency and effect of his arguments, an atheist does not appear positively to refuse that a God may be; but he insists that He has not discovered Himself, whether by the utterance of His voice in audible revelation, or by the impress of His hand upon visible nature. His verdict on the doctrine of a God is only that it is not proven. It is not that it is disproven. He is but an atheist. He is not an anti-theist." And on p. 61: "Atheism might plead a lack of evidence within its own field of observation. But anti-theism pronounces both upon the things which are and the things which are not within that field. It breaks forth and beyond all those limits that have been prescribed to man's excursive spirit by the sound philosophy of experience; and by a presumption the most tremendous, even the

usurpation of all space and of all time, it affirms that there is no God." Dr Chalmers, it will be perceived, limits atheism to critical and sceptical atheism, and identifies anti-theism with dogmatic atheism. On this account it is surprising that Mr Holyoake (Reasoner, xi. 15, 232) should have written: "The course to be taken is to use the term secularists as indicating general views, and accept the term atheist at the point at which ethics declines alliance with theology; always, however, explaining the term atheist to mean 'not seeing God,' visually or inferentially—never suffering it to be taken (as Chalmers, Foster, and many others represent it) for anti-theism—that is, hating God, denying God,—as *hating* implies personal knowledge as the ground of dislike, and *denying* implies infinite knowledge as the ground of disproof." Chalmers and Foster obviously laboured not to efface but to emphasise the very distinction which Mr Holyoake himself draws.

My chief reason for preferring the distinction between atheism and anti-theism explained in the lecture to that drawn by Dr Chalmers and Mr Holyoake is, that it is of greater practical use. There is little need for a single term to specify dogmatic atheism; there is great need for a single term at once inclusive and distinctive of all theories opposed to theism. The word non-theistic is unsatisfactory, not merely because of its hybrid origin and character, but also because it is far too comprehensive. Theories of physical and mental science are non-theistic, even when in no degree, directly or indirectly, antagonistic to theism.

NOTE II., page 10.

ABSOLUTE ATHEISM IMPLIES INFINITE KNOWLEDGE.

The passage from John Foster to which reference is made in the lecture is the following: "The wonder turns on the great process, by which a man could grow to the immense intelligence that can know there is no God. What ages and what lights are requisite for this attainment? This intelligence involves the very attributes of Divinity, while a God is denied. For unless this man is omnipresent—unless he is at this moment in every place in the universe,—he cannot know but there may be in some place manifestations of a Deity by which even *he* would be overpowered. If he does not absolutely know every agent in the universe, the one that he does not know may be God. If he is not himself the chief agent in the universe, and does not know what is so, that which is so may be God. If he is not in absolute possession of all the propositions that constitute universal truth, the one which he wants may be that there is a God. If he cannot with certainty assign the cause of all that he perceives to exist, that cause may be a God. If he does not know everything that has been done in the immeasurable ages that are past, some things may have been done by a God. Thus unless he knows all things—that is, precludes another Deity by being one himself—he cannot know that the Being whose existence he rejects does not exist."—(Essays, p. 35, 15th ed.)

The criticism of Mr Holyoake on this argument, to which reference is also made in the lecture, will be found

on pp. 75, 76 of his 'Trial of Theism,' 1858. "Two points," he says, "are to be noticed. Foster puts a strict, an arbitrary, and an absolute sense upon the word 'denial.' Next, that he introduces a false element into the argument—that of *personal knowledge*—which is forbidden to the atheist when he introduces it into reasoning. A single remark will show the fallacy of this assumption. It is quite true that we do not 'know' that God does *not* exist; it is also true that no theist knows that He *does* exist. If I ask a theist the question, Have you any actual knowledge through the senses that God exists? he will probably tell me that I am both ignorant and presumptuous. He will remind me that 'no man hath seen God at any time.' He will tell me that the existence of Deity is not a fact of the senses—that it is not a matter of *knowledge*, but a matter of revelation, or an argument from analogy—a logical inference—or an intuition—or a feeling—or a question of probability, when we reason inductively from causes to effects—or a 'necessity of the intellect' when speculation tires on the wing, and thought has exhausted its utmost force. If, therefore, the theist is without the knowledge that God *does* exist, why should Foster demand of the atheist the knowledge that God does *not* exist? If the theist refuses the test of eyesight for his affirmation, why does he demand it of the atheist for his 'denial'? If the theist may use argument, why not the atheist? If the theist may reason and can reason only on the evidence of the intellect, why do Foster, Chalmers, and all divines demand from the atheist evidence of the senses? The case fairly stated stands thus: The theist says, all things considered—all present argument weighed—it is clear to me that God exists. The atheist says, all things

considered—all present argument weighed—it appears to me that the infinite secret is beyond our finite powers to penetrate. Foster cannot be said to recognise this fact. He refutes our position by evading it; and those who do not know, or do not care to discern what it is, assume a question settled which indeed is not truly touched."

It often happens that even able and candid men attempt to refute arguments which they have failed to understand. Of this there could not be a clearer and more striking, almost startling, instance than these words of Mr Holyoake. It is impossible to read them without perceiving that, when he wrote them, he had not the most remote conception of what Foster meant or aimed at. He plainly did not perceive that Foster's argument was in no degree or respect directed against critical atheism—against what Mr Holyoake calls "our position"—but entirely and exclusively against absolute or dogmatic atheism. Failing in some inexplicable way to perceive this, he naturally fell into those curious mistakes which he presents as criticisms.

Chalmers's restatement of Foster's argument is presented in the following passage: "To be able to say that there is a God, we may have only to look abroad on some definite territory, and point to the vestiges that are given of His power and His presence somewhere. To be able to say that there is no God, we must walk the whole expanse of infinity, and ascertain by observation that such vestiges are to be found nowhere. Grant that no trace of Him can be discerned in that quarter of contemplation which our puny optics have explored, does it follow that, throughout all immensity, a Being with the essence and sovereignty of a God is nowhere to be found? Because through our loopholes of communi-

cation with that small portion of external nature which is before us, we have not seen or ascertained a God, must we therefore conclude of every unknown and untrodden vastness in this illimitable universe that no Divinity is there? Or because, through the brief successions of our little day, these heavens have not once broken silence, is it therefore for us to speak to all the periods of that eternity which is behind us, and to say that never hath a God come forth with the unequivocal tokens of his existence? Ere we can say that there is a God, we must have seen, on that portion of nature to which we have access, the print of His footsteps, or have had direct intimation from Himself, or been satisfied by the authentic memorials of His converse with our species in other days. But ere we can say that there is no God, we must have roamed over all nature, and seen that no mark of a Divine footstep was there; and we must have gotten intimacy with every existent spirit in the universe, and learned from each that never did a revelation of the Deity visit him; and we must have searched, not into the records of one solitary planet, but into the archives of all worlds, and thence gathered that, throughout the wide realms of immensity, not one exhibition of a reigning and living God ever has been made. . . . To make this out we should need to travel abroad over the surrounding universe till we had exhausted it, and to search backward through all the hidden recesses of eternity; to traverse in every direction the plains of infinitude, and sweep the outskirts of that space which is itself interminable; and then bring back to this little world of ours the report of a universal blank, wherein we had not met with one manifestation or one movement of a presiding God.

For man not to know of a God, he has only to sink beneath the level of our common nature. But to deny Him, he must be a God himself. He must arrogate the ubiquity and omniscience of the Godhead."—Natural Theology, vol. i. b. i. ch. ii.

NOTE III., page 19.

PHYSICUS.

In 'A Candid Examination of Theism' by "Physicus," the argumentation in my previous volume has been subjected to a lengthened examination (see "Supplementary Essay II.," pp. 152-180). It is not, perhaps, very necessary, yet it may not be altogether undesirable, to make a few remarks on the criticisms with which I have been honoured.

Physicus has withdrawn his faith from theism and transferred it to the metaphysical physics expounded by Mr Herbert Spencer, but pronounced scientifically indefensible by such physicists as Sir W. Thomson, Clerk-Maxwell, Balfour Stewart, Tait, &c. He manifestly desires to be impartial, but is far from very successful in this respect. Thus, at the very outset of his work he tells us that, "with the partial exception of Mr Mill, no competent writer has hitherto endeavoured, once for all, to settle the long-standing question of the rational probability of theism;" that "a favourite piece of apologetic juggling is that of first demolishing atheism, pantheism, materialism, &c., by successively calling upon them to explain the mystery of self-existence, and then tacitly

assuming that the need of such an explanation is absent in the case of theism—as though the attribute in question were more conceivable when posited in a Deity than when posited elsewhere;" and that "another argument, or semblance of an argument, is the very prevalent one, 'Our heart requires a God; therefore it is probable that there is a God.'" The first of these statements virtually pronounces incompetent all writers on natural theology, except Mr Mill and Physicus; the second ascribes to theism a mode of reasoning which it has never employed; and the third travesties the argument which it declares to be prevalent. Such errors are extremely common in the pages of Physicus. He is, nevertheless, an interesting writer.

His objections to the reasoning by which I attempt to show that on no plausible theory of the nature of matter can it be concluded to be self-existent, or anything more than an effect, arise entirely from overlooking the hypothetical and disjunctive character of my argumentation. Thus, for example, he censures my having "adopted the absurd argument" by which Professor Clerk-Maxwell endeavours to show that atoms cannot have been made by any of the processes called natural, and thinks it relevant to assert that the atomic theory is probably not true. Why, my approval of Professor Clerk-Maxwell's argument is expressly stated to be conditioned by the supposition that the atomic theory of the ultimate nature of matter is true, while I have nowhere indicated that I myself adopt that theory or prefer it to others. The same remark applies to his criticism of the argument founded on the vortex-ring hypothesis of the origin of matter, as to which he has further failed to perceive that it rests on the idea of a

perfect fluid. His notion that the argument as to the non-eternal character of heat implies a knowledge of the universe as a whole, has not the slightest reason or relevancy. I have adopted none of the theories alluded to, as I should thereby have weakened my argument and represented theism as dependent on some particular speculation in physics, when in reality its evidence is greatly superior to what can be brought forward for the majority of scientific doctrines. I merely argued that, from any plausible theory of matter, it follows that matter is not to be regarded as self-existent; and that the reasoning by which it has been attempted to prove that heat is non-eternal, requires to be refuted by those who assert or assume that the world is eternal.

He passes from that part of my work which he has failed to understand, in consequence of disregarding the theory of disjunctive syllogisms and the principles of physics, to my treatment of the design argument. This he admits to have been quite conclusive against all opponents until he himself appeared. "For this argument assumes, rightly enough, that the only alternative we have in choosing our hypothesis concerning the final explanation of things, is either to regard that explanation as Intelligence or as Fortuity. This, I say, was a legitimate argument a few months ago, because, up to that time, no one had shown that strictly natural causes, as distinguished from chances, could conceivably be able to produce a cosmos; and although the several previous writers to whom Professor Flint alludes—and he might have alluded to others in this connection—entertained a dim anticipation of the fact that natural causes might alone be sufficient to produce the observed universe, still these dim anticipations were worthless as arguments

so long as it remained impossible to suggest any natural principle whereby such a result could have been conceivably effected by such causes. But it is evident that Professor Flint's time-honoured argument is now completely overthrown, unless it can be proved that there is some radical error in the reasoning whereby I have endeavoured to show that natural causes not only *may*, but *must*, have produced existing order. The overthrow is complete, because the very groundwork of the argument in question is knocked away; a third possibility, of the nature of a necessity, is introduced, and therefore the alternative is no longer between Intelligence and Fortuity, but between Intelligence and Natural Causation." From words like these one would suppose that Physicus had discovered a quite new explanation of the order of the universe. But no; when we turn to Chapters iv. and vi.—those to which he so triumphantly points us—we find that he has merely to tell us, what materialists have constantly told us, from Leucippus and Democritus downwards—namely, that "all and every law follows as a necessary consequence from the persistence of force and the primary qualities of matter," and that he presents to us a number of loose statements to this effect, singly as "illustrations," and collectively as a "demonstration," of it. If the design argument is not valid against the reasoning in these chapters it was never valid in any reference. Physicus produces no particle of evidence to show that force is a "self-existent substance" or "eternal substratum," and explains in no single case how without law it should produce law, or how it should produce order, unless so defined as to quantity, so distributed, and otherwise so conditioned, as to presuppose intelligence. The root of a large amount of his con-

fusion is to be traced to his entertaining mythical and anti-scientific notions about "force" and "the persistence of force," which a deliberate and candid perusal of the chapters on "the varieties of energy" and "the conservation of energy" in any good treatise on Physics might possibly dissipate.

The criticisms on the evidence for the moral attributes of God entirely ignore its character and weight as a whole, and need no other answer than that the sentences objected to should be restored to their original connection and interpreted in relation to their context.

It is impossible to read the following passages from the work of Physicus without deeply deploring that a blunder in physics should have caused so much confusion in an interesting intellect, and inflicted so much pain on an apparently noble nature:—

"If it had been my lot to have lived in the last generation, I should certainly have rested in these 'sublime conceptions' as an argument supreme and irrefutable. I should have felt that the progress of physical knowledge could never exert any other influence on theism than that of ever tending more and more to confirm that magnificent belief, by continuously expanding our human thoughts into progressively advancing conceptions, ever grander and yet more grand, of that tremendous Origin of Things—the Mind of God. Such would have been my hope—such would have been my prayer. But now, how changed! Never in the history of man has so terrific a calamity befallen the race as that which all who look may now behold advancing as a deluge, black with destruction, resistless in might, uprooting our most cherished hopes, engulfing our most precious creed, and burying our highest life in mindless desolation. Science,

whom erstwhile we thought a very Angel of God, pointing to that great barrier of Law, and proclaiming to the restless sea of changing doubt, 'Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed,'—even Science has now herself thrown down this trusted barrier; the flood-gates of infidelity are open, and atheism overwhelming is upon us."—Pp. 51, 52.

"So far as the ruination of individual happiness is concerned, no one can have a more lively perception than myself of the possibly disastrous tendency of my work. So far as I am individually concerned, the result of this analysis has been to show that, whether I regard the problem of theism on the lower plane of strictly relative probability, or on the higher plane of purely formal considerations, it equally becomes my obvious duty to stifle all belief of the kind which I conceive to be the noblest, and to discipline my intellect with regard to this matter into an attitude of the purest scepticism. And forasmuch as I am far from being able to agree with those who affirm that the twilight doctrine of the 'new faith' is a desirable substitute for the waning splendour of 'the old,' I am not ashamed to confess that, with this virtual negation of God, the universe to me has lost its soul of loveliness; and although from henceforth the precept to 'work while it is day' will doubtless but gain an intensified force from the terribly intensified meaning of the words that 'the night cometh when no man can work,' yet when at times I think, as think at times I must, of the appalling contrast between the hallowed glory of that creed which once was mine, and the lonely mystery of existence as now I find it,—at such times I shall ever feel it impossible to avoid the sharpest pang of which my nature is susceptible. For

whether it be due to my intelligence not being sufficiently advanced to meet the requirements of the age, or whether it be due to the memory of those sacred associations which to me, at least, were the sweetest that life has given, I cannot but feel that for me, and for others who think as I do, there is a dreadful truth in those words of Hamilton,—Philosophy having become a meditation, not merely of death, but of annihilation, the precept *know thyself* has become transformed into the terrific oracle to Œdipus—'Mayest thou ne'er know the truth of what thou art.'"

Be not Martyrs by Mistake.

NOTE IV., page 38.

HISTORY, CAUSES, AND CONSEQUENCES OF ATHEISM.

Few works were written expressly against atheism until the sixteenth century was considerably advanced. The 'Antiatheon' of Fr. Boria, published at Toulouse in 1561, the 'Atheomachie' of De Bourgeville, published at Paris in 1564, the 'Atheomachie' of Baruch Caneph, published at Geneva in 1581, and the 'Atheomastix' of G. Ab. Assonlevilla, published at Antwerp in 1598, were among the earliest specimens of the class.

Publications of this kind followed one another in rapid succession during the seventeenth century. Among those which appeared in English, the following may be specified: Martin Fotherby's 'Atheomastix' (1622); Walter Charleton's 'Darkness of Atheism expelled by the Light of Nature' (1652); Henry More's 'Antidote against Atheism' (1662); Sir Charles Wolseley's 'Un-

reasonableness of Atheism' (1669); J. M.'s 'Atheist Silenced' (1672); John Howe's 'Living Temple, against Atheism, or Epicurean Deism' (First Part, 1675); Ralph Cudworth's 'True Intellectual System of the Universe, wherein all the Reason and Philosophy of Atheism is confuted, and its Impossibility demonstrated' (1678); Richard Bentley's 'Boyle Lecture: A Confutation of Atheism' (1692); J. Edwards's 'Thoughts on the Causes and Occasions of Atheism' (1695); and A. B.'s 'Mystery of Atheism, or the Devices to Propagate it' (1699).

A continuous stream of attacks on atheism flowed from the press all through the eighteenth century. A mere catalogue of them would fill many pages. It is a fact which merits to be carefully noted, that during the long period which intervened from about the middle of the sixteenth to about the middle of the eighteenth century, notwithstanding the multitude of books written against atheism, scarcely any—perhaps none—appeared in its defence. Its assailants were rather at war with a tendency or frame of spirit prevalent in society, than with definite forms of atheism, strictly so called. Their application of the terms atheism and atheist was generally very loose—often quite reckless. Epicureanism, even when combined with Deism, Hobbism, and Spinozism, were long treated as the chief manifestations of atheism. There were probably, however, in the period referred to, a large number of real atheists, although they did not consider it desirable to propagate their opinions through the printing-press.

Attempts were early made to sketch the history of atheism, as, *e.g.*, by Niemann in 1668, Reiser in 1669, Jenkins Thomas in 1709 (1716), and Reimann in 1725. But there is even at present no general history of atheism of much value. One of the most ridiculous works of

a historical character on atheism is the 'Dictionnaire des Athées' (1799), by the enthusiastic atheist, P. S. Maréchal. Here Justin Martyr, Saint Augustine, Pascal, Bossuet, Leibnitz, and the most virtuous and pious men of all ages, are glorified as atheists. In partial excuse it must be remembered that Reimann, in the excess of his Protestant zeal, has enlarged his list of atheists with Roman Catholic divines, and that Roman Catholic writers have frequently relegated the reformers and other Protestant theologians to the same category.

From the very rise of a specifically anti-atheistical literature, the desire was manifested to trace the causes of atheism, but the harsh and illiberal mode of viewing differences of opinion so long and widely prevalent, had a very injurious effect on the investigation. Much that is excellent on this subject will be found vigorously stated by Prof. J. S. Blackie in his 'Natural History of Atheism' (1877).

The question, whether or not atheism is compatible with morality and with political security and prosperity, was keenly and fully discussed in numerous writings published in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The history of this controversy, which is a remarkable testimony to the intellectual influence of Machiavelli and Bayle, deserves to be written. It seems quite forgotten and unknown at present.

In note II. of Appendix to 'Theism,' I have indicated the works in which the relation of religion to morality seems to me to have been most thoughtfully discussed. Reference may also be made to the paper by W. H. Mallock on "Modern Atheism: its Attitude towards Morality," in the 'Contemporary Review,' Jan. 7, 1877.

NOTE V., page 44.

LANGE'S HISTORY OF MATERIALISM.

The only general History of Materialism worthy of mention is the 'Geschichte des Materialismus' of F. A. Lange. Few works in the department of philosophy have recently attracted so much attention or been so highly praised.

It everywhere shows clearness, vigour, and critical acuteness of intellect, a wide acquaintance with the positive sciences, a competent knowledge of the writings of the chief ancient and modern materialists, and the power of natural and spirited expression. It has no claim, however, to be considered as in any sense an epoch-making book, and is not without great faults. Strictly speaking, it is not a history of materialism, but a history of science, written on the assumption that the whole world of knowledge can alone be explained by matter and mechanism. It is, to a far larger extent, an exposition of the theories and a discussion of the problems which seem to its author to bear on materialism, than an account and criticism of directly materialistic speculations. It nowhere gives evidence of original research or great erudition, and has thrown little new light on any period of the history the course of which it traces. The view which it presents of the history of the opposition to materialism is most inadequate throughout. The ability of materialists and the worth of their writings are, in general, overestimated.

The work is divided into two books, the one devoted to materialism before Kant, and the other to materialism

since Kant. The former book contains four sections. The first section treats of materialism in antiquity, or rather in classical antiquity, for nothing is said about the materialism of China or India, or any other nation than Greece and Rome. The special subjects of its five chapters are—the atomism of Democritus; the sensationalism of the Sophists and the ethical materialism of Aristippus; the reaction of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle against materialism and sensationalism; the doctrine of Epicurus; and the poem of Lucretius. The second section is occupied with the transition period, which extends from the decay of the ancient civilisation to Bruno, Bacon, and Descartes. The third section deals with the materialism of the seventeenth century, and has three chapters, which are devoted respectively to Gassendi, as the restorer of Epicureanism; to Hobbes; and to Boyle, Newton, Locke, and Toland. The fourth section treats of the materialism of the eighteenth century. It contains, first, an account of the influence of English materialism on France and Germany; next, an exposition of the materialistic views of La Mettrie; then an analysis of Holbach's 'System of Nature;' and finally, an estimate of the reaction against materialism in Germany—an estimate which takes into account the philosophy of Leibnitz, Wolfianism, and German Spinozism.

The second book of Lange's 'History of Materialism' is likewise divided into four sections. Section first discusses the Kantian philosophy in its relation to materialism, and then describes the phases of the so-called philosophical materialism propagated by Feuerbach, Max Stirner, Büchner, Moleschott, and Czolbe. Section second consists of four chapters, which have for

their subjects the bearing of materialism on exact research, the relation between matter and force, scientific cosmogony, and Darwinism and teleology. The third section treats of man's place in the animal world, the relation of brain and soul, scientific psychology, the physiology of the organs of sense, and the world as representation. The last section deals with ethical materialism and religion.

The most general results at which Lange arrives are, that there is no genuine science except that which explains phenomena in terms of matter and motion; that all our mental capacities, and even the laws of intuition and thought, must be traceable to the elements and organisation of the brain; that all material objects, including the brain and the organs by which we perceive, think, and will, are mere phenomena or experiences; that no other world can be known by us than the phe nomenal and empirical world, which must be elucidat by materialism and mechanism; that philosophy is science, and has nothing to do with truth, but should cultivated as a poetry of notions; that religion is essen to human nature, but must be entirely severed fron belief; and that philosophy and religion, when thus understood, will afford a solid basis for moral and æsthetic culture, secure social progress, and vastly benefit humanity. The doctrine composed of these propositions has been actually hailed by a rather numerous class of persons as itself a philosophy which triumphantly refutes materialism, and worthily completes the work of Kant. But in spite of their noisy and foolish applause, I venture to affirm that if German philosophy should have for its ultimate outcome this conglomerate of materialism, scepticism, and nonsense, it will have to

be regarded as the greatest *fiasco* the world has ever witnessed.

Lange's history has been translated into English by Mr Thomas, and into French by Professor Nolen. The French translator is the author of three able articles on the book—two essays published in the 'Révue Philosophique' (October and December 1877), and a memoir read before the Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques, and published in a separate form (Paris, Reinwald & Co., 1877). Vaihinger's 'Hartmann, Dühring, und Lange' is an important and instructive book, although its author is far too enthusiastic an admirer of Lange.

Note VI., page 47.

Chinese Materialism.

The essay of Yang Choo was translated into English by Dr Legge in the prolegomena to the edition of 'Mencius,' contained in his Chinese classics. The works of Licius, to whom it owes its preservation and transmission, have recently been completely translated into German by Ernest Faber, in his 'Naturalismus bei den alten Chinesen' (1877).

There is said to be comparatively little theoretical materialism in China, although practical materialism is nowhere more prevalent. We know, however, very little about the course of Chinese thought from the eleventh century to the present time. Probably Chinese scholars have at length done something like justice to the ancient

classics of the celestial empire. If so, it is extremely to be desired that they would now direct their attention to the study of its later literature and philosophy.

NOTE VII., page 49.

HINDU MATERIALISM.

The Charvaka system is described in the 'Sarva-Darsana-Sangraha,' which has been translated into English by Professor Cowell. The part of the work which relates to the Charvaka doctrine will be found in the 'Pandit,' vol. ix., No. 103, pp. 162-166.

All the Hindu systems of philosophy, except Vedantism, expressly teach the eternity of a material principle from which the universe has been evolved, but they also teach the eternity of soul. The Vaiseshika system is a physical philosophy based on an atomic theory. It explains all material objects, and changes by the aggregation, disintegration, and redintegration of uncaused, eternal, imperceptible, indivisible atoms; but it differs from the atomism of Democritus in at least two respects—it assigns to the atoms qualitative distinctions, and it does not represent them as capable of constituting souls. It is doubtful whether or not its founder, Kanada, and some of his followers, believed in a supreme spirit. Each soul was supposed to be eternal, and infinitely extended or ubiquitous, although only knowing, feeling, and acting where the body is. The Vaiseshika aphorisms of Kanada, with comments from two Hindu expositors,

have been translated by Professor A. E. Gough (Benares, 1873). For general accounts of the system, consult Colebrooke's 'Essays,' and Monier Williams's 'Indian Wisdom.'

The Sankhya system is atheistical, and approaches nearly to materialism, notwithstanding that it affirms the eternity of innumerable distinct souls. It assigns activity and self-consciousness not to soul but to nature. Its general doctrines may be thus summarised: 1°. Its aim is to make impossible human pain by arresting the course of transmigration. 2°. It professes to accomplish this by means of science. 3°. It represents science as consisting of a thorough knowledge of the developed principle or the world, of the undeveloped principle or nature, and of the soul. 4°. It also represents it as a knowledge of twenty-five elements of things and categories of intelligence, which may, however, be all reduced to nature and soul. 5°. It expresses the relations of the twenty-five principles to one another in the following formula: "Nature, root of all, is no product; seven principles are products, and productive; sixteen are products only; soul is neither a product nor productive."

The chief sources of information as to the Sankhya philosophy are accessible to students unacquainted with Sanscrit. Most of the Sutras of Kapila have been translated into French by B. St Hilaire, in the 'Mémoires de l'Institut' for 1852. There is an English translation of the first book, as also of a Hindu commentary on it, by Dr Ballantyne. Of the valuable production called the Karika, there are no less than five European translations —Lassen's, Panthier's, Windischman's, Colebrooke's, and St Hilaire's. The volume which contains Colebrooke's translation comprises also two commentaries on the

Karika,—one by Professor H. H. Wilson; and another, which he has rendered from the vernacular into English, and is, consequently, a book of the highest importance to a student of the Sankhya system. It was published in 1837, under the auspices of the Oriental Society.

There is an article by Dr Muir, on "Indian Materialists," in the 'Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society,' vol. xix.

Note VIII., page 54.

Early Greek Materialism.

See Mullach's 'Fragmenta Philosophorum Graecorum,' pp. 340-377, for what remains of the writings of Democritus. The accounts of his system given by Hegel, Zeller, Lange, Grote, and Ferrier may be specified as of exceptional ability and interest.

Lange connects Empedocles with Democritus, on the ground that he was the first to put forth the idea of the gradual natural development of organised beings. Anaximander is better entitled to this distinction. His conception of development was also much more like Darwin's than was that of Empedocles, inasmuch as it supposed an advance from simple to complex forms, or a process of differentiation, whereas the Empedoclean view was that of a combination of heterogeneous organs. If the great merit of a biological hypothesis, however, be, as Lange fancies, the setting aside of the idea of final causes, the latter notion may claim a certain superiority;

indeed, from this point of view, absurdity itself is an advantage. A natural orderly development cannot possibly help to disprove the existence of a final cause or of a supreme reason.

I have elsewhere had occasion to make the following remarks regarding the two philosophers above mentioned: "Anaximander, one of the earliest of Greek philosophers, working out his idea of the Infinite or Unconditioned being the first principle of the universe, arrived both at a sort of rude nebular hypothesis and a sort of rude development hypothesis. From the ἄπειρον, or primitive unconditioned matter, through an inherent and eternal energy and movement, the two original contraries of heat and cold separate: what is cold settles down to the centre, and so forms the earth; what is hot ascends to the circumference, and so originates the bright, shining, fiery bodies of heaven, which are but the fragments of what once existed as a complete shell or sphere, but in time burst and broke up, and so gave rise to the stars. The action of the sun's heat on the watery earth next generated films or bladders, out of which came different kinds of imperfectly organised beings, which were gradually developed into the animals which now live. Man's ancestors were fishlike creatures which dwelt in muddy waters, and only, as the sun slowly dried up the earth, became gradually fitted for life on dry land. A similar view was held by the poet, priest, prophet, and philosopher Empedocles. He taught that out of the four elements of earth, air, fire, and water, and under the moving power of Love resisting Hate, plants, animals, and man were in succession, and after many an effort, and many a futile

conjunction of organs, generated and elaborated into their present shapes."—'Historical Philosophy in France,' p. 91, where the authorities for these statements are indicated.

NOTE IX., page 73.

EPICUREAN MATERIALISM.

For Epicurus and his doctrines our chief sources of information are the writings of Diogenes Laertius, Lucretius, and Cicero. In the general history of philosophy by Maurice, Lewes, Zeller, Ueberweg, &c., Epicureanism is well discussed; also in Lange's 'Geschichte des Materialismus,' and Carrau's 'La Morale Utilitaire' (1875). But probably the most important work on the subject is Guyau's 'La Morale d'Epicure et ses rapports avec les doctrines contemporaines' (1878).

The study of Lucretius owes much in this country to Munro's masterly edition of the 'De rerum natura.' The literature regarding the greatest poet of materialism is extensive. I must be content to specify the magnificent essay on the genius of Lucretius in Professor Sellar's 'Roman Poets of the Republic;' the thoughtful and beautiful little treatise of Professor Veitch, entitled 'Lucretius and the Atomic Theory;' and the interesting volume by Mr Mallock in Blackwood's "Ancient Classics for English Readers."

Note X., page 75.

Materialism in the Middle Ages.

Lange devotes eighty pages of his 'History of Materialism' to the middle ages. He presents to us in them, however, instead of a properly historical narrative and exposition, merely general dissertations on the relation of the monotheistic religions to materialism — on the Aristotelian doctrine of matter and form and its influence on scholasticism—and on the return of materialistic views with the revival of the sciences. It may be a matter of opinion whether these dissertations are profound or superficial, clear or confused; but no person who has made any study of medieval history is likely to regard them as learned. The author obviously knew nothing whatever at first hand, and little even at second hand, concerning medieval writers. Hence he substitutes for them Humboldt and Liebig, J. S. Mill, Sir W. Hamilton, Trendelenburg, Fortlage, &c.

A history of theoretical materialism in the middle ages could not be written, for the simple reason that there was none to write. A historical account might have been given, however, of the course of medieval thought respecting the nature of matter and the problem of its eternity or non-eternity; the materialistic views which were entertained as to the character and origin of life and soul might have been indicated; and the manifestations of ethical materialism during the period might have been described. A considerable amount of information as to the discussion of the problem of the eternity and non-eternity of matter will be found

in Rabbi Schmiedl's 'Studien' and in Kaufmann's 'Attributenlehre.'

Note XI., page 83.

Materialism of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries.

Lange's account of the relation of Gassendi to materialism seems to me to be one-sided. The learned and worthy priest, by distinctly maintaining that the atoms of matter were not eternal, and by elaborately arguing that they merely explained physical things—by representing them as created *ex nihilo* by the Divine Will—and by strenuously defending both the immateriality and the immortality of the soul,—did at least as much to dissociate atomism from materialism as to further the cause of materialism by his atomism. He may be fairly held to have been rather the precursor of that long series of rational assailants of materialism, which included in England such men as Cudworth, Henry More, John Smith, Richard Bentley, &c., of whom, strangely enough, Lange appears never to have heard —than the coryphæus of modern materialism itself. The account given of the system of Gassendi by Damiron in his 'Essai sur l'Histoire de la Philosophie en France au xvii[e] siècle,' (t. i.), is fuller and truer.

Lange does not seem to have been aware of the attempts made by Overton, Dodwell, and Coward, during the seventeenth century and the early years of the eighteenth century, to prove the soul material and

naturally mortal, or of the discussions to which these attempts gave rise.

It is a pleasure to be able to recognise that Lange's account of the French materialism of the eighteenth century is at once extremely able and generally correct.

Among the French writers belonging to the latter half of the eighteenth century who may fairly be classed as atheists were, besides La Mettrie (1709-1751) and Von Holbach (1723-1789), Diderot (1713-1784), Helvetius (1715-1771), D'Alembert (1717-1783), Lalande (1732-1807), Naigeon (1738-1810), Condorcet (1743-1794), and Maréchal (1750-1803). La Mettrie, Diderot, Helvetius, and D'Alembert may be regarded as forming an earlier, and Lalande, Naigeon, Condorcet, and Maréchal a later group, with Von Holbach as the connecting link.

Diderot's scepticism assumed the form of materialistic atheism, or materialistic pantheism, only after he became an associate of Holbach. He is the subject of two elaborate and excellent works—the one by Rosenkranz and the other by J. Morley. Almost half a century ago, when the materials for forming an estimate of his character were much less abundant than now, and wholly unassorted, it was divined by Mr Carlyle with the true insight of genius, and portrayed with a skill which has not since been matched.

Helvetius avoided a frank avowal of materialism, but his entire doctrine—one deeply stained with sensual and selfish principles—implied it. Perhaps the best exposition and criticism of it will be found in Cousin's 'Hist. de la Phil. Mor. au dix-huitième siècle,' leçons iv., v.

D'Alembert gave expression to his views regarding religion only in his private conversation and correspon-

dence. He had a clear perception of some of the difficulties to an acceptance of materialism. And hence, notwithstanding his intimacy with Diderot, his unbelief assumed rather an agnostic than a materialistic form. He was the only morally worthy, or even morally decent man, belonging to the older atheistical group. Its three other members had some good qualities, but they were shamelessly impure, licentious, and untruthful. It is a significant but lamentable fact that sympathy with their sceptical views should have of late led many literary men to eulogise their characters, to exaggerate their good qualities, and to ignore or excuse their vices.

Lalande is known almost entirely by his distinguished services to science; but he actively assisted his friend Maréchal in propagating atheism. He contributed largely to the 'Dictionnaire des Athées.'

Condorcet—a man of noble and generous nature—was an enthusiast for the philosophy which explains everything by matter and sensation. In my article "Condorcet," in the 'Ency. Brit.,' a general view of his life and teaching will be found, with references to the best sources of information regarding him.

Naigeon and Maréchal were fanatical preachers of the gospel according to Diderot and Holbach. The numerous writings of both are at present deservedly forgotten; but of course, in a time when the literary discoveries of materialists are not less remarkable than their scientific achievements, no one can be sure but that Naigeon may be speedily announced to have been equal to Newton—and Maréchal to have really been, what he aspired to be, another Lucretius.

Laplace was reputed to be an atheist by some of his contemporaries. In his writings he seems to have stu-

diously refrained from the expression of religious opinion; and this, it must be remembered, at a time when the profession of atheism was a passport to popularity.

In the 'De la Nature' (4 tom. 1761-66) and other works of Robinet, an ingenious and grandiose theory of evolution was expounded. Although not materialistic, and still less atheistic, it was of such a character that it must have helped to swell the stream of eighteenth-century materialism. It has been well treated of by Damiron in his 'Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de la Philosophie au xviii[e] siècle,' and by Rosenkranz in the 'Z[t]. Der Gedanke,' B[d]. i.

Note XII., page 86.

La Mettrie.

The Éloge of Frederick the Great on La Mettrie is reprinted in Assezat's edition of 'L'homme machine' (1865). M. Assezat initiated the process of rehabilitating the memory of La Mettrie. Lange followed in 1866. M. Nérée Quepat published in 1873 his 'Essai sur La Mettrie, sa vie et ses œuvres.' Although it gives far too favourable a view, both of the conduct of La Mettrie and of his writings, it can be commended as an industriously and intelligently composed production. Du Bois-Reymond's eulogium was pronounced before the Royal Academy of Prussia in 1875.

Lange, in the chapter dedicated to La Mettrie, has collected, reproduced in a clear and condensed form, and skilfully combined the most plausible and judicious

views enunciated in that author's writings. This gives as result a most flattering reflection of La Mettrie's character as a thinker. Unfortunately the real La Mettrie was rambling, incoherent, and self-contradictory to the last degree. It would, in consequence, not be difficult to make about as truthful a picture of him as Lange's, and from materials likewise supplied by his own books, yet which should represent him, in accordance with the description of D'Argens, as "fou, au pied de la lettre." "Sa tête," says Diderot, "est si troublée et ses idées sont à tel point décousues, que, dans la même page, une assertion sensée est heurtée par une assertion folle, et une assertion folle par une assertion sensée."

NOTE XIII., page 96.

MIRABAUD AND VON HOLBACH.

J. B. de Mirabaud died in 1760, ten years before the publication of the 'Système de la Nature' which bore his name on its title-page. Naigeon says that he had seen a MS. of Mirabaud, entitled 'Des Lois du monde physique et du monde morale,' in which views similar to those in the 'Système' were advocated. If this statement could be relied on, the conjecture might be permitted that the MS. was made use of by Holbach and his friends. Mirabaud was, undoubtedly, a materialist and an enemy of Christianity, although, perhaps, not an atheist. His 'Sentiments des philosophes sur la nature de l'âme' (1743), and 'Le Monde, son origine et son antiquité' (1751), show quite clearly to what school of

thought he belonged. His literary reputation was chiefly due to his translation of Tasso's 'Jerusalem Delivered,' published in 1724. He was perpetual secretary of the French Academy from 1742 until his death. There is an account of him by D'Alembert in the first volume of the 'Histoire des membres de l'Académie française.'

Von Holbach was at least the chief author of the 'System of Nature.' He was a diligent and ready writer, and must have done some good service by his French translations of German scientific works. The anti-religious publications of which he was in whole or in part the author are very numerous. Most of them were published by Michael Rey of Amsterdam. They all appeared either without name or under false names. A list of them is given in Barbier's 'Dictionary of Anonymous Works.'

Lange's account of the 'System of Nature' is elaborate and laudatory. Mr Morley's, in his 'Diderot,' is of a very similar character. N. S. Bergier's 'Examen du Matérialisme,' 2 tom., 1771, is a good refutation.

NOTE XIV., page 101.

ENGLISH MATERIALISM IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

Dr Erasmus Darwin's 'Zoonomia, or the Laws of Organic Life,' 2 vols., does not strictly fall to be mentioned here, as it was published in 1794-96; but, along with the 'Botanic Garden' and 'Phytologia,' it did much to keep

materialism in existence during the earlier part of the century. Its fundamental idea was that vegetables and animals originated in living filaments, susceptible of irritation. Irritability develops, so argued Dr Darwin, into sensibility, and sensibility into perception, memory, and reason. The theory was annihilated by Dr Thomas Brown in his 'Observations on the Zoonomia,' Edinb., 1798.

Dr Erasmus Darwin was very famous in his day, although he never attained, of course, the height of reputation which has been reached by his grandson, Dr Charles Darwin. His mind was in many respects similar in character, the chief difference being that his fancy was even more fertile and bold, and that he was less patient and methodical in the investigation of facts. Regarding him see the following work,—'Erasmus Darwin, by Ernst Krause, tr. by W. S. Dallas. With a Preliminary Notice by Charles Darwin: 1879.' Also Dr J. H. Stirling's 'Darwinianism,' 1894.

The 'Essay on the Origin and Prospects of Man' (3 vols., 1831), by Mr Thomas Hope, is an almost unreadable production. Its sentences often defy alike logical and grammatical analysis. How the author of 'Anastasius' could have written in so trailing, involved, and obscure a fashion is a mystery. The existence of God as the inconceivable primary cause, from which all other causes and effects proceed by way of radiation, emanation, or evolution, is affirmed; but, if there be some theism or pantheism in this the work otherwise seems to be thoroughly materialistic. A single sentence will, perhaps, be a sufficient specimen both of its style and of its science. In answer to the fundamental question, "On what depends, between the bodies merely inorganic and lifeless and the bodies organic and living, the differ-

ence which leaves in the former a total absence of organisation, life, and growth, and to the latter first gives the possession of these new attributes?" Mr Hope writes thus: "It only depends on this, that in the former bodies, when their first molecules, from opposite sides driven together and meeting, are made to consolidate and cohere sufficiently to have of the new substances still fluid that enter and penetrate between them, by the pressure of electricity of a combining sort and of cold from without, and by the resistance or counter-pressure of the former solids from within, a portion again stopped, condensed, congealed, and made to combine and consolidate, of these new substances from without, during their consolidation the pressure on the former ones within already consolidated, so exceeds in these former ones from within their elasticity or power to yield to that pressure of these outer ones, without being by it broken, dispersed, and decombined, as not to be able themselves to remain solid and cohering, while these new ones are added to them;—as we see in stones which when humidity driven is there by combining electricity and cold congealed, it soon makes them burst and themselves again decombine; whereas in the latter bodies, when of the new fluids driven in them a portion is stopped, congealed, consolidated and made to cohere together, the extension which these new fluids experience in being consolidated in crystalline forms, disperses not by its pressure the former solids, nor decombines these entirely, but, by the elasticity these possess, only makes them also in their turn extend, till by their extension they again exert over the new ones consolidating a counter-pressure, sufficient to make these also cohere even with themselves, and thus gradually increase the general mass of

substances solid and cohering, in so doing, make it exhibit the phenomena called of life and growth."—Vol. ii. pp. 35, 36.

Shortly after the book appeared, Mr Carlyle justly described it as "a monstrous Anomaly, where all sciences are heaped and huddled together, and the principles of all are, with a childlike innocence, plied hither and thither, or wholly abolished in case of need; where the First Cause is figured as a huge Circle, with nothing to do but radiate 'gravitation' towards its centre; and so construct a Universe, wherein all, from the lowest cucumber with its coolness, up to the highest seraph with his love, were but 'gravitation,' direct or reflex, 'in more or less central globes;'" "a general agglomerate of all facts, notions, whims, and observations, as they lie in the brain of an English gentleman: all these thrown into the crucible, and if not fused, yet soldered or conglutinated with boundless patience; and now tumbled out here, heterogeneous, amorphous, unspeakable, a world's wonder."

Mr Hope's work is frequently referred to, and occasionally quoted, in the 'Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation' (1844), published anonymously, but now acknowledged to be written by the late Dr R. Chambers. The existence of a personal Deity is distinctly recognised in this latter work, but all the forms of life and mind are taught to have been necessarily evolved from primary nebulous matter. The theory which it expounds is substantially the theory of evolution at present prevalent. It was criticised by Sir D. Brewster in the 'North British Review,' No. 3; by Prof. Dod in an elaborate article which was republished in the second series of the 'Princeton Theological Essays;' by Mr Hugh Miller in 'Footprints

of the Creator;' by Prof. Sedgwick in the 'Edinburgh Review,' No. 82; and by Dr Whewell in 'Indications of a Creator,' &c. It is, perhaps, worth noting that Karl Vogt translated the 'Vestiges' into German in 1847.

In volumes i. and ii. of the 'Oracle of Reason,' published in 1842 and 1843, there is a series of forty-eight papers on "The Theory of Regular Gradation," in which it is maintained that "all the facts which form the sciences tend to the conclusion that the inherent properties of 'dull matter,' as some *bright* portions of it have designated it, are good and sufficient to produce all the varied, complicated, and beautiful phenomena of the universe;" that "matter *can* make men and women, and every other natural phenomenon—unassisted, undirected, and uncontrolled." In these papers atheism is openly avowed. Their author was a Mr William Chilton.

In Prof. J. S. Blackie's 'Natural History of Atheism,' pp. 221-247, the materialistic and atheistic views of Mr Atkinson and Miss Martineau are stated and criticised.

Andrew Jackson Davis, the Poughkeepsie seer, expounded in his 'Principles of Nature and her Revelations,' 2 vols., the doctrine that all matter is gradually advancing under the influence of an Organiser towards a spiritual state, and that souls have been generated from matter until they became substantive existences which will survive the death of the body, and pass from lower to higher stages of being, according to eternal laws of progression.

Many so-called spiritualists are materialists, and even atheists, teaching that all things originate in nature, and are governed by physical necessity. Materialism, although incompatible with theism and rational religion, is quite consistent with mythology and superstition.

Note XV., page 131.

Recent Materialism.

Among the recent defenders of materialism in Germany, Moleschott, Vogt, Büchner, Löwenthal, Haeckel, Dühring, and Strauss may be named. Jacob Moleschott's 'Kreislauf des Lebens' (Circulation of Life), published in 1852, was the first systematic exposition of what is called scientific materialism. It was written in a popular style, and contained a considerable amount of interesting biological information, but contributed nothing to the proof of the fundamental dogmas of materialism; these, indeed, it borrowed from that feeble production of Ludwig Feuerbach, which it pronounces to be "the immortal critique of religion."

Charles Vogt threw himself with great vigour and violence into the conflict excited by Moleschott's book, and by a celebrated discourse of Rudolph Wagner "On the Creation of Man and the Substance of the Soul" (1854). His 'Lectures on Man, his place in creation and in the history of the earth,' published in 1863, have been translated into English, and show well what manner of person he is.

Louis Büchner has been probably the most efficient and successful of the popularisers of contemporary materialism. His 'Matter and Force' (1855), 'Nature and Science' (1862), and 'Man's Place in Nature' (1869), have passed through many editions, and been translated into most European languages. The first mentioned of these books seems to have almost taken the place formerly filled by Holbach's 'System of Nature.' There have been

many replies to it; that of M. Janet, 'Materialism of the Present Day'—of which there is a good translation by Gustave Masson—combines most happily, perhaps, elegance as to form with thoroughness as to substance.

Edward Löwenthal regards even the authors just mentioned as neither sufficiently materialistic nor speculatively consistent, seeing that they affirm the coexistence of two principles—matter and force. He maintains that matter is alone primordial, and that force is merely a product of atomic aggregation. He also labours to construct "a religion without a creed" on his materialism, and to form an "international freethinkers' association," from which he expects great results; in a word, he aspires to be the founder of what he calls "Cogitantenthum" (Thinkingdom), which is to take the place of Christendom. His 'System and History of Naturalism,' first published in 1861, is now in its fifth edition. The system is very feebly and loosely constructed, and the history is very inaccurate.

Ernst Haeckel is the most enthusiastic and influential of German Darwinists. His reputation as a "morphologist" and "zoologist" stands very high. He is a thorough materialist and atheist, but he prefers to call himself a monist. He regards the eternity of matter as a law of nature, and spontaneous generation as a scientific certainty. He gets enraged when he hears of final causes; and he tells those who dare to doubt of the ape-origin of humanity, that "it is an interesting and instructive circumstance that those men are chiefly indignant at the discovery of the natural development of man from the monkey, between whom and our common tertiary ancestors there is the least observable difference, whether as to intellectual capacity or cerebral character-

istics." His 'General Morphology,' published in 1866, his 'Natural History of Creation,' of which the first edition appeared in 1868, and his 'Anthropogenie' (1874), are the works in which he has expounded his so-called monism. The second and third of them have been translated into English. For a good general exposition of his system, based on the 'Natural History of Creation,' see M. Léon Dumont's 'Haeckel et la théorie de l'évolution en Allemagne.'

Eugene Dühring has endeavoured in various works to establish and apply a so-called "philosophy of reality" which is essentially materialistic. He gave a general exposition of his system in a 'Course of Philosophy' published in 1875. The work has considerable merits; but, besides other defects, it has the fatal fault of seldom giving proofs either of its affirmations or its negations. The book of Hans Vaihinger, mentioned in Note V., will be found highly useful to the student of Dühring's philosophy.

David F. Strauss closed his literary career by a "Confession," in which materialism and pantheism were blended together, and Darwinism was accepted as the new and true Gospel. The celebrity which he had acquired, and his talent as a writer, were the chief reasons why this confession—'The Old and the New Faith,' 1873—excited a remarkable amount of attention. As regards real intellectual substance it is poor, superficial, and confused. The "new faith" is a faith as old as speculative error. As held by Strauss it is an unreasoned faith in the eternity of matter, in spontaneous generation, in the incarnation of the ape, and in the truth of optimism, although the world is ruled by blind and aimless, unconscious and unmoral forces. Its central posi-

tive and constructive idea is that the universe — the totality of existence designated nature—is the only God which the modern mind enlightened by science can consent to worship. Among the multitude of reviews which the book called forth, those of Rauwenhoff and Nippold, of Huber, of Vera, of Henry B. Smith ('Philosophy and Faith,' pp. 443-488), of J. Hutchison Stirling ('Athenæum,' June 1873), and of Ulrici, might be specified. Ulrici's article—an annihilating and unanswerable criticism of the philosophical postulates and dogmas of the latest faith of Strauss—has been translated into English, with an introduction, by Dr Krauth.

Materialism has now for almost thirty years been spreading more and more widely in Germany, with what results the future will show. It has owed its success to the spirit of the times; not to any intellectual superiority of its advocates over its opponents. Schaller, Lotze, J. H. Fichte, Ulrici, Bona Meyer, Huber, Hoffmann, Froschammer, Fabri, Weiss, Wigand, and a host of others, have done all that could be desired in the way both of repelling and of returning its attacks. There is considerable exaggeration current as to the extent, and especially as to the quality, of its conquests. The highest class of German thinkers is chiefly composed of those who regard materialism as the least satisfactory of philosophical systems.

In France scarcely any work of merit has recently appeared in defence of materialism, if positivism be not counted as materialism. The communistic conspirator, A. Blanqui, wrote a curious little book entitled 'L'Eternité par les astres, hypotèse astronomique' (1872), which showed very considerable literary talent, and which

was very ingeniously reasoned out from the assumption that matter is infinite both in extension and duration. He displayed in it his characteristic disregard of the nature of the consequences of his principles. Thus he contended that, since there must be all possible combinations of worlds if matter be absolutely infinite, there must be many worlds like the present—stars with, for example, duplicates in them of France, Paris, the Commune, and Blanqui, and even of all these at every stage of their existence. He neither proved, however, that matter is doubly infinite, nor that we have such a comprehension of absolute as to be able to deduce from it definite inferences.

M. Lefèvre, in his 'La Philosophie' (1879), has written the history of philosophy from a materialistic standpoint, and given a general exposition of the system of materialism.

In the work of M. Caro—'Le Matérialisme et la Science'—the pretensions of so-called scientific materialism are very searchingly tested, and the conclusion that the positive sciences can neither displace nor replace metaphysics is very convincingly maintained.

In England, Mr Herbert Spencer, Professors Huxley and Tyndall, and a few other writers of distinguished philosophical or scientific talents, have done far more to diffuse materialism than any of those who are willing to avow themselves materialists. Never was materialism more fortunate than when it secured to itself the sympathy and support of minds so vigorous and so richly gifted. It is quite incorrect, however, to say that in this country the foremost scientific men have, as a body, gone over to the materialistic camp or to the side of scepti-

cism. This assertion was lately made by Mr Froude; and it called forth from Professor Tait the following unanswerable reply: "When we ask of any *competent* authority, who were the 'advanced,' the 'best,' and the 'ablest' scientific thinkers of the immediate past (in Britain), we cannot but receive for answer such names as Brewster, Faraday, Forbes, Graham, Rowan Hamilton, Herschel, and Talbot. This must be the case unless we use the word science in a perverted sense. Which of these great men gave up the idea that nature evidences a designing mind? But perhaps Mr Froude refers to the advanced thinkers still happily alive among us. The names of the foremost among them are not far to seek. But, unfortunately for his assertion, it is quite certain that Andrews, Joule, Clerk-Maxwell, Balfour Stewart, Stokes, William Thomson, and suchlike, have each and all of them, when the opportunity presented itself, spoken in a sense altogether different from that implied in Mr Froude's article. Surely there are no truly scientific thinkers in Britain farther advanced than these." See 'International Review' for November 1878, Art. "Does Humanity require a New Revelation?"

Among those who have combated materialism with ability in publications written in English, the following may be mentioned: Dr L. S. Beale, Professor Bowen, Principal Caird, Dr Carpenter, President Chadbourne, Professor Cocker, Rev. Joseph Cook, Principal Dawson, Dr S. Harris, Dr Hickok, Dr Hodge, Professor Le Conte, Professor Leebody, President M'Cosh, Dr Macvicar, Dr Martineau, Professor Clerk-Maxwell, Professor Mivart, President Porter, Professors Balfour Stewart and Tait, Dr Hutchison Stirling, and Principal Tulloch.

Note XVI., page 163.

Materialism and Force.

Professors Balfour Stewart and Tait, in the preface to the fifth edition of the ingenious and suggestive work entitled 'The Unseen Universe,' say: "As professors of natural philosophy we have one sad remark to make. The great majority of our critics have exhibited almost absolute ignorance as to the proper use of the term *Force*, which has had one, and only one, definite scientific sense since the publication of the 'Principia.' As such men are usually among the exceptionally well educated, ignorance of this important question must be all but universal." The observation is probably only too true. And perhaps professors of natural philosophy have themselves contributed largely to the mental confusion which prevails on the subject. The definitions and descriptions of force given by writers on physics are conflicting enough to explain and excuse almost any amount of ignorance and error regarding it. Faraday tells us that "matter is force;" Grove that "force is an affection of matter;" and Dubois-Reymond that "force is nothing else than an abortion of the irresistible tendency to personification." Professor Moleschott declares that "force is essential to matter;" Professor Spiller affirms that "no material constituent of body is originally endowed with force;" and Dr Winslow maintains that "matter is a mere vehicle which possesses and holds force as a bladder holds water or a sack meal." Professor Balfour Stewart uses the word force as meaning "that which changes the

state of a body, whether that state be one of rest or of motion;" but Professor Barker means by it "motion itself;" and Dr Bastian understands by it "a mode of motion." If all professors of natural philosophy would use the word Force, and, I may add, the word Energy, in the same definite, intelligible, and self-consistent way as Professors Stewart and Tait, Clerk-Maxwell and Sir William Thomson, a vast amount of mental confusion would speedily pass away. In this reference, a perusal of Chap. III. of 'The Unseen Universe' cannot be too strongly recommended.

Both the scientific and the religious consequences of error as to the signification and relationship of energy and force may be very serious. To affirm of force what is true of energy is as great a mistake as to confound the birth-rate of a country with its population. In consequence of this error, Mr Herbert Spencer has transformed or transmogrified the grand law of the Conservation of Energy—the law that, "in any system of bodies whatever, to which no energy is communicated by external bodies, and which parts with no energy to external bodies, the sum of the various potential and kinetic energies remains for ever unaltered"—into a so-called law of the Persistence of Force—the dogma that "the quantity of force remains always the same"—which physical science wholly disowns. "The sole recorded case," observe Professors Stewart and Tait, "of true persistency or indestructibility of force which we recollect having ever met with, occurs in connection with Baron Munchausen's remarkable descent from the moon. It is, no doubt, a very striking case; but it is apparently unique, and it was not subjected to scientific scrutiny."

It is much to be regretted that professional critics and popular writers should have so generally gone to Mr Herbert Spencer's chapter on "The Persistence of Force" for enlightenment as to the subject of which it treats, although probably in no other eight consecutive pages in the English language are there so many physical and metaphysical errors combined. Many of these persons, not having had their senses educated by appropriate scientific instruction to discern between good and evil in such matters, have been under the delusion that in perusing the chapter indicated they were refreshing themselves with water drawn from the fountain of pure truth, when they were really intoxicating themselves with "the wine of the Borgias." The dreadful consequences which have sometimes resulted from this mistake may be seen exemplified in the case of "Physicus."

A number of Mr Spencer's errors regarding force are well refuted by Professor Birks in his 'Modern Physical Fatalism,' pp. 159-196.

On the nature and relationship of matter and force the three following works are important: Harms, 'Philosophische Einleitung in die Encyklopaedie der Physik;' Huber, 'Die Forschung nach der Materie;' and Dauriac, 'Des Notions de matière et de force dans les sciences de la nature.'

NOTE XVII., page 171.

MATERIALISM AND LIFE.

Materialism is obviously unproved so long as life is not shown to be a property or an effect of matter. Life has certainly not yet been shown to be either the one or the other. "The present state of knowledge," says Professor Huxley, in his article on "Biology," in the 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' "furnishes us with no link between the living and the not-living."

Numerous definitions have been given of life, but even the best of these definitions appear to be seriously defective. Biology has not yet succeeded in forming a precise and accurate notion of what life is. Perhaps we must be content to understand by it, so far as it falls under the consideration of physical science, the cause of the direction and co-ordination of the movements or actions characteristic of bioplasmic matter.

Mr Herbert Spencer (Principles of Biology, vol. i. pp. 60, 61) has well indicated the unsatisfactoriness of the definition of Schelling—"Life is the tendency to individuation;" of that of Richerand—"Life is a collection of phenomena which succeed each other during a limited time in an organised body;" of that of De Blainville—"Life is the twofold internal movement of composition and decomposition, at once general and continuous;" and of that of Lewes—"Life is a series of definite and successive changes, both of structure and composition, which take place within an individual without destroying its identity." Mr Spencer has also laboured to provide a better definition; and some writers suppose that his suc-

cess has been almost complete. Thus Professor Bain (Logic, Part II. p. 258) says: "Choosing assimilation as a characteristic fact of bodily life, and reasoning as an example of mental life, and contrasting both with the characters of dead matter, Mr Herbert Spencer arrives at the following highly complex definition: 1. Life contains a process or processes of *change.* 2. The change is not a simple or individual act, but a *series or succession of changes.* 3. Life involves a plurality of *simultaneous* as well as successive changes. 4. The changes are *heterogeneous,* or various in character. 5. The various changes all *combine* to a *definite* result. 6. Finally, the changes are in correspondence with *external coexistences and sequences.* In sum: Life is a set of changes, simultaneous and successive, combined to a definite result, and in correspondence with external circumstances. Or, in a briefer form, Life is the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations. So carefully has the comparison been conducted, that no exception could be taken to any part of this definition. Every one of the particulars occurs in all living bodies, and in no kind of dead matter." This estimate I cannot but regard as much too favourable. There is not a single particular in Mr Spencer's definition which is not as characteristic of the action of a watch as of the life of a plant or animal. His so-called definition is a sort of expression of what is common to the manifestations of machinery, life, and mind; but it gives us no information either as to what mechanism, life, and thought are, or as to how we are to distinguish them. It professes to be a definition of life, but really leaves life wholly out of account, in order to facilitate the work incumbent on a materialistic philosophy. In fact, Mr Spencer has not

sought a definition in a rational way. It is vain to attempt to define life by generalising its own effects. Biologists of all schools have abandoned this method of procedure as utterly unscientific, and now seek to accomplish their aim by the experimental study of life in its simplest forms. The true method to be followed has perhaps never been so clearly traced as by the illustrious French physiologist recently deceased, M. Claude Bernard, in his 'Leçons sur phénomènes de la vie communs aux animaux et aux vegetaux' (1878). M. Bernard has been often claimed as a materialist and as a positivist; but, in reality, his profound physiological science led him to results fatal both to materialism and to positivism; and a careful study of the work mentioned will render impossible the acceptance of all definitions of the kind to which that of Mr Spencer belongs—definitions based on a merely outside or superficial view of the manifestations of life.

Science is not only entitled but bound to trace the stream of life back as far as it can. The hypothesis of Mr Darwin, that all terrestrial organisms may have originated in a single primordial germ, which was produced when the earth was fitted to receive it, is a perfectly legitimate scientific hypothesis, although, of course, it should not be believed until it is proved. Equally legitimate in a scientific point of view is the hypothesis that life did not originate on this earth, but has come to it from remote and older worlds. This hypothesis has been presented in two forms.

1. According to M. Edgar Quinet (La Création, T. ii. L. xi. ch. ii.), Professor Preyer (Deutsche Rundschau, Heft 7), and Dr O. Zacharias (Athenæum, Bd. i. pp. 413-429), life is not fixed and limited to certain points

of space or periods of time; is of a cosmical, not of a terrestrial nature; has been coeval with the universe; has passed from nebula to nebula; and has been derived by the earth from the mass whence it was itself detached. Professor Preyer, indeed, imagines that living and organic existences preceded and deposited all dead and inorganic matter. Even when not urged in this burlesque shape, the view that life has come to the earth from the mass whence it was severed seems untenable. Contemporary science is very far astray if our planet has not passed through a condition in which its temperature must have been fatal to all life.

2. According to Sir William Thomson (Address to the British Association in 1871), and Helmholtz (Preface to the second part of the first volume of the German translation of Thomson and Tait's 'Natural Philosophy'), life may have been carried to our earth in the clefts or crevices of meteoric stones—the fragments of shattered worlds, once rich in vital forms. The attempt of Zöllner, in his work 'On Comets,' to show that this conception is essentially unscientific, is extremely weak. Of course the hypothesis does not explain the origin of life, but only suggests that its origin may have to be sought much further away than where scientists are looking for it. This, however, is all that it proposes to do. It does not profess, at least as stated by Sir William Thomson, to be a theory of the origin of life, but only a possible way of accounting for the origin of terrestrial life. The objection that the heat of the meteoric stones must have been incompatible with their conveyance of life does not seem to have been substantiated. Apparently the heat in a deep crevice of a large meteorite would not be so intense as to destroy a living germ.

But although the hypothesis is quite scientific in its nature, and has not been shown to involve any physical impossibility, no positive evidence has been produced on behalf of it.

Many anti-theists in the present day feel constrained by their inability to account, on purely physical principles, for the life associated with matter, to maintain its eternity. Thus some of those who trace it in the way which has just been mentioned from our world to others, forthwith conclude that it is coeval with matter, and that both matter and life must be regarded as unoriginated. They overlook that the life under consideration is life which implies material conditions, and these of a kind not necessarily involved in the very constitution of matter; that it could only appear when the universe was in a certain state of development; that it could not have existed, for example, in a nebula. To trace life from world to world can never show it to be eternal, if it can appear in no world which has not passed through certain stages before reaching the condition in which alone life can be realised. Besides, the assumption that matter is eternal is unscientific and arbitrary.

The old hypothesis of a world-soul has also recently been revived in various forms, and presented as an explanation of the origination of life in individual organisms. In this way materialism loses itself in pantheism, while in no form is the hypothesis of a world-soul demanded or supported by critically ascertained and scientifically interpreted facts.

Then there are speculators who would efface the distinction between the living and the dead, the organic and the inorganic, by ascribing to every atom of matter a small portion or faint degree of life. Those who pro-

ceed thus take the suggestions of fancy for the findings of reason; they abandon true science for a worthless metaphysics—natural philosophy for *Naturphilosophie.* They manifestly leave the problem which they profess to solve as mysterious as ever. What is commonly called dead matter is certainly not alive in the same sense as what is commonly called living matter; and to call it alive in some other sense does not help us in the least to understand how it can originate life in the ordinary sense of the term. No real problem can be solved by merely verbal artifices.

The only scientific proof of the materialistic conception of life would be the establishment of the hypothesis of spontaneous generation, or, as it is now often termed, "abiogenesis." M. Pouchet in France, and Dr Bastian in England, have laboured to supply the requisite proof. They have utterly failed, even in the judgment of those who persist in believing without proof in spontaneous generation. In M. Pasteur's 'Mémoire sur les Corpuscules organisées suspendus dans l'Atmosphere;' in Prof. Tyndall's essays on "Dust and Disease," and "Putrefaction and Infection;" in Prof. Lister's "Contribution to the Germ Theory of Putrefaction and other Fermentative Changes" in vol. xxvii. of the Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, &c.,—ample evidence will be found for rejecting the notion of spontaneous generation.

Several eminent scientific men, who are constrained to admit that there is no experimental evidence that life can arise save from antecedent life, notwithstanding, believe that spontaneous generation actually occurred in an inaccessible and exceptional past. Thus Prof. Huxley, in his Address to the British Association, says:

"If it were given me to look beyond the abyss of geologically recorded time to the still more remote period when the earth was passing through physical and chemical conditions, which it can no more see again than a man can recall his infancy, I should expect to be a witness of the evolution of living protoplasm from non-living matter;" and Prof. Tyndall, also in an Address to the British Association, declares: "By an intellectual necessity I cross the boundary of the experimental evidence, and discern in that Matter which we in our ignorance of its latent powers, and notwithstanding our professed reverence for its Creator, have hitherto covered with opprobrium, the promise and potency of all terrestrial life." The attitude of mind revealed by these words is not a reasonable one. We cannot be justified in believing a scientific hypothesis in favour of which we fail to find a single relevant fact, while every experiment undertaken to prove it ends in confirming the rule of which it would be the violation. Our belief in the continuity of nature must be conformed to our knowledge of the continuity of experience. The right of belief claimed by Professors Huxley and Tyndall is, in this instance, a right to believe without evidence and against evidence. It need scarcely be pointed out that if matter could produce life, the improbability of its having produced it only in a passing crisis of its history must be regarded as enormous. What physical and chemical forces did once, they would surely do often, if not continually. Matter now has not lost any known property or power which it possessed when in a cooling state, nor has it been shown that its molecular constitution is greatly changed, while it is certainly better fitted for the support of life. What reason is there for imag-

ining that it was ever more fitted than at present for originating life?

The attempt to explain life by Protoplasm is generally acknowledged to have failed. The reader will find materials for forming a judgment on the controversy in Prof. Huxley's 'Physical Basis of Life,' in Dr Lionel Beale's 'Protoplasm,' and Dr Hutchison Stirling's 'Concerning Protoplasm.' The Rev. Joseph Cook, in several of his second series of Boston Monday Lectures, presents Dr Lionel Beale's results in a very popular and effective manner. I regret to perceive, however, that he and others should accept so readily Dr Lionel's view that the body is divisible into dead and living matter, the latter being a comparatively small portion, which becomes red under the application of carmine. I confess I fail to see that his division will hold, and believe that every kind of matter — Beale's so-called living matter included — will ultimately be analysed into inorganic elements.

The world-renowned Bathybius of Huxley, Haeckel, and Strauss, has turned out to be "a sea-mare's nest." The explorations of the Challenger have shown that the supposed "vast sheet of living matter enveloping the whole earth beneath its seas" is little more than a deposit of gypsum. Huxley, with characteristic candour, hastened, as soon as the results of these explorations were communicated to him, to acknowledge his mistake. Even Haeckel no longer argues that the existence of Bathybius is proved, but ventures only to maintain that its non-existence is not proved.

Were this note not already too long, I should have submitted Haeckel's views concerning the origin of life to a special examination. It may be necessary to state

in order to prevent misconceptions as to my own position, that I do not regard the explanation of life by mechanical and chemical causes as absurd or impossible, or as involving any difficulties nearly so great as those which consciousness or mind presents to materialism.

To the references already given in this note add, Sir W. Turner's 'Cell Theory, Past and Present—Inaugural Address,' 1890, and Prof. Calderwood's 'Evolution and Man's Place in Nature,' 1893.

Note XVIII., page 173.

Materialism and Mind.

My chief reason for passing so briefly over the materialistic attempts to account for mental phenomena is the manifest inadequacy of these attempts. When materialism comes to deal with mind it simply breaks down. It has not as yet been able to bring forward any fact which proves more than that the mind is intimately connected with, and largely dependent on, the body—a conclusion which affords no support to materialism.

It may be of use to note some of the more prominent respects in which materialism fails when it undertakes to account for mind.

I. It leaves unexplained the fact that physical and mental phenomena are distinguished by differences far greater than any of those which distinguish other phenomena. Materialists represent the contrasts between matter and mind as similar to the distinctions between different states of matter. This only shows that they do not realise what the facts of the case are. The unlikeness between any physical and any mental phenomenon is incomparably greater than the unlikeness between any two physical phenomena. It is an entirely peculiar un-

likeness. What is called matter may pass through many stages, may assume many phases, and may perform many functions; but in all its transformations, even the most surprising, it never ceases to be an object of sense, a something external, extended, bounded, divisible, movable, &c.; while no phenomenon of mind—no thought, volition, or feeling—ever has any of these properties, but has a number of other properties never found in matter. The perception of this truth early led men to believe that the phenomena called mental could not be resolved into, or accounted for by, those called material; and the most recent materialism has not succeeded in showing that any other belief can be reasonably entertained.

Prof. Bain, in his volume on 'Mind and Body,' while explicitly admitting that mental and bodily states are "utterly contrasted" and "cannot be compared," maintains that the physical and the mental are "the two sides of a double-faced unity." But he has not shown that utterly contrasted qualities can coinhere in a single substance, nor that what is unextended can either be a side of anything or have a side of its own. Further, as Prof. Tyndall remarks in his Birmingham lecture, —"It is no explanation to say that the objective and subjective effects are two sides of one and the same phenomenon. Why should the phenomenon have two sides? This is the very core of the difficulty. There are plenty of molecular motions which do not exhibit this two-sidedness. Does water think or feel when it forms into frost-ferns upon a window-pane? If not, why should the molecular motion of the brain be yoked to this mysterious companion—consciousness?"

II. Materialism fails to show that molecular changes in the nerves or brain ever pass into mental states. This

is the argument employed by Tyndall in the quotation given in the lecture. Striking statements to the same effect will be found in Du Bois-Reymond's 'Ueber die Grenzen des Naturerkennens,' pp. 20, 21, and in Dr Ferrier's 'Functions of the Brain,' pp. 255, 256. Says the former: "I will now prove conclusively, as I believe, that not only is consciousness unexplained by material conditions in the present state of our science (which all will admit), but that, in the very nature of things, it never can be explained by these conditions. The most exalted mental activity is no more incomprehensible in its material conditions than is the first grade of consciousness—namely, sensation. With the first awakening of pleasure and pain experienced upon earth by some creature of the simplest structure appeared an impassable gulf, and the world became doubly incomprehensible." Says the latter: "We may succeed in determining the exact nature of the molecular changes which occur in the brain when a sensation is experienced, but this will not bring us one whit nearer the explanation of the nature of that which constitutes the sensation. The one is objective and the other subjective, and neither can be expressed in terms of the other."

III. Materialism fails to explain the unity of consciousness. This is an old because an obvious argument, but the ablest thinkers in Europe still regard it as valid and invincible. It has been presented with masterly skill by Lotze both in his 'Medical Psychology' and in his 'Mikrokosmos.' A careful statement of it, with reference to modern theories, will also be found in an article by Prof. Bowen in the 'Princeton Review' for March 1878—"Dualism, Materialism, or Idealism?"

IV. The consciousness of personal identity is also a

fact with which materialism has not yet succeeded in showing that it can be reconciled. There is no doubt as to the fact. Thought, memory, and the sense of responsibility, amply attest it. Have materialists shown how it can be harmonised with the hypothesis that man is merely body, and the certainty that all the elements and atoms of the body are in perpetual change and circulation? The answer must be in the negative. This seems to me to be very convincingly proved in M. Janet's 'Materialism of the Present Day,' ch. vii.

V. Another mental fact with which materialism has not yet shown itself to be reconcilable is self-consciousness. In self-consciousness the mind distinguishes itself from all material objects, including all the organs of its own body. It appears to itself to know and feel itself to be distinct from the external world, distinct from its body, distinct from its brain. It may, of course, be mistaken: this apparent opposition of body and soul which is essentially inherent in self-consciousness may be an illusion altogether, or there may be some way of transcending it which will allow us to assign to it a certain value, and yet to identify soul and body; but materialism has certainly hitherto failed to show it to be mistaken, and has never even dealt seriously with the problem which the fact referred to presents. The problem is not one likely to be solved by merely calling body "object-consciousness," and the soul a "side," or by any similar verbal perversities.

VI. Materialism does not account for the internal spontaneity or the self-activity which is characteristic of mind. It has not yet proved either that we are moved wholly from without, or that we are mere automata. It claims to have done so, but the claim has for-

tunately not been made good. On this point see Meyer's 'Philosophische Zeitfragen,' k. viii.; the paper of Prof. Huxley in the 'Fortnightly Review' for Nov. 1874, on the question—"Are animals automata?" the articles of Dr Carpenter, Prof. Mivart, and the Duke of Argyll in the 'Contemporary Review' during 1875, suggested by it; and Dr Elam's 'Automatism and Evolution.'

VII. Materialism is irreconcilable with the moral feelings of human nature.

Note XIX., page 174.

Materialism and Morality.

M. Tissot has endeavoured to show, in his 'Principes du droit public' (liv. ii. ch. i.), that materialism does not necessarily preclude belief in God, free-will, moral law, and a future life. His argument is skilfully presented, but it is not conclusive; indeed, it will be found when strictly examined to amount merely to the plea that since materialism is essentially inconsistent, we have no right to demand that it shall be consistent, or to censure its special inconsistencies. He contends that because materialism ascribes force to matter, it may with equal reason ascribe to it life; that if it may hold matter to be capable of life, it may likewise hold it to be capable of thought; that when it acknowledges matter may think, nothing forbids it also to admit, on the testimony of consciousness, that matter may be, in certain circumstances, possessed of free-will; and that to whatever it assigns free-will it may assign true morality. Now what

such argumentation really proves is, not that materialism is innocuous, but that it is absurd—not that it is compatible with morality, but that it is incompatible with reason. It shows that materialism starts from the first with the assumption that matter is not matter, but something more than matter, and that at every onward step it has renewed recourse to this assumption; in other words, it shows that materialism is *consistently unreasonable.*

The views of morality actually taught by many contemporary materialists are extremely debasing. It would be easy and perhaps useful to prove this by quotations, but it would also be painful, and I refrain. Mivart ('Lessons from Nature,' ch. xiii.), J. B. Meyer ('Phil. Zeitfragen,' kap. ix.), and various other writers, have touched on the subject. It is lamentable to observe how widely heathenish and even brutish sentiments as to individual and social morality are springing forth, especially in Germany, from the materialism which is at present prevalent.

The argument from conscience against materialism is thus stated by an able American author, Prof. G. P. Fisher: "No man of sane mind can deny that the phenomena of the moral nature are as real as any which the senses or instruments of a physicist can observe. They are facts which science, in the large sense of the term, must take notice of or abdicate its functions. To ignore the vast and various phenomena which connect themselves with the sense of moral responsibleness is impossible. What account shall be given of moral praise and blame—of self-approval and censure? Here these feelings are, and here they always have been. Do they testify to the truth? If they do not, then away with

the language which only serves to deceive; away with all the multiform expressions of moral approbation or condemnation; away with courts of law and the other infinitely various manifestations of the sense of justice and moral accountableness on which the entire fabric of social life reposes! The evolutionist must allow that these verdicts of the moral faculty, be their genesis what it may, are as valid as are any judgments of the intellect. The moral discernment rests on as solid a foundation as the intellectual perceptions. Now apply the doctrine that the determinations of the will — the faithfulness of St John and the treachery of Judas alike — are the necessary effect of atomic movements of matter. They simply indicate a certain molecular action of the matter in a corner of the brain. Their moral approval or condemnation, the joy of one who has triumphed over a temptation, the remorse of one who has betrayed the innocent, are the veriest folly. A man who maliciously shoots his neighbour has no more occasion to blame himself for the deed than has a horse who destroys a man's life by a kick. Men call such an animal, in figurative speech, a vicious animal; and if materialism is true, there is no other kind of vice possible to a human being. Tyndall, in one of his late productions, argues that this doctrine of molecular ethics is perfectly consistent with the application of motives for the purpose of inducing men to act in one way rather than another. These motives, it is implied, are forces thrown into the scale that the beam may rise on the opposite side. This is the statement which fatalists of every time are for ever making. But the point insisted upon is not the freedom of the will as found by direct consciousness, although this evidence of man's moral

freedom is incontrovertible; but the phenomena of moral approval and disapproval, of guilt, self-accusation, and remorse, are the facts demanding some explanation which shall not destroy their reality in the very act of attempting to explain them. Here it is that the materialistic psychology breaks down. Nor can it be said that this is opposing a doctrine by merely pointing out its mischievous consequences. The affirmations of conscience referred to as putting to rout the advocates of materialism are as truly perceptions and judgments as are any of the propositions that result from the exercise of the senses or the understanding. If materialistic evolution, as predicated of moral action, be true, the rational nature is at war with itself. There is an insoluble contradiction in human intelligence itself, which no sophistical juggle of words can avail to cover up, much less to remove."—'Princeton Review,' January 1878, pp. 210, 211.

Principal Tulloch, in the first of his 'Croall Lectures,' makes some interesting remarks to the same effect. What he says of "sin," for example, in the following passage may be applied to all the phenomena of our moral consciousness. "It"—the doctrine of materialistic evolution—"leaves no room for the idea of sin. For that which is solely a growth of nature cannot contain anything that is at variance with its own higher laws. If the individual and social man alike are merely the outcome of natural forces working endlessly forward toward higher and more complex forms, then, whatever man is, he is not and cannot be a sinner. The mixed product of internal and external forces—of what is called organism and environment—he may, at certain stages of his progress, be very defective. But he has not fallen

below any ideal he might have reached. He is only at any point what the sum of natural factors which enter into his being have made him. The two conceptions of sin and of development, in this naturalistic sense, cannot coexist. I cannot be the outcome of natural law and yet accountable for the fact that I am no better than I am."

Carneri, Jaeger, and others have attempted to apply Darwinism to morals. Miss Cobbe, Ebrard, R. Schmid, Trümpelmann, Wigand, and others, have criticised it in this relation.

Note XX., page 183.

Positivism and its Schools.

The chief works regarding positivism published before 1874 were mentioned on p. 259 of my 'Philosophy of History in France and Germany.' The following publications may be specified as having appeared since that date: Many excellent papers by M. Pillon, and some by M. Renouvier, in the 'Critique Philosophique' for the years 1875 and 1878; 'La Philosophie Positive,' a review, edited by MM. Littré and Wyrouboff; 'La Revue Occidentale,' edited by M. Pierre Lafitte; the articles of Mr Harrison on "The Religious and Conservative Aspects of Positivism," in the 'Contemporary Review,' vols. xxvi. and xxvii.; É. Littré, 'Fragments de Philosophie Positive' (1876); M. Ferraz, 'Étude sur la Philosophie en France,' ch. vi. (1877); M. Caro on 'M. Littré et la Positivisme' (1883); E. Caird, 'The Social Philosophy and Religion of Comte'; H. Gruber, 'August Comte, der Begründer des Positivismus,' and 'Der Positivismus vom Tode August Comte's bis auf unsere

Tage' (1857-1891); and R. Flint's 'Historical Philosophy in France,' ch. x.

Positivists who acknowledge any allegiance to Comte may be thus grouped in relation to him. First, those who accept his system as a whole—the philosophy, the polity, and the religion. Their head, the present Comtist pontiff, is M. Lafitte; and among their representatives in France are M. Audiffrent, Dr Robinet, and M. Sémerie; and in England Dr Bridges, Mr Congreve, and Mr Harrison. Their literary organ is the 'Revue Occidentale.' Second, those who accept the entire general philosophy of Comte, but reject his polity and religion. Their acknowledged chief was M. Littré; M. Naquet, Dr Robin, and M. Wyrouboff are now among their best known representatives. Their organ, 'La Philosophie Positive,' was founded in 1867. Third, those who do not accept even the philosophy of Comte as a whole, but who profess to receive the spirit, method, and principles of his teaching as to the doctrine of science. They are often called English positivists, although, of course, writers like M. Taine must be included among them. They are simply phenomenalists and experimentalists. They have no common system of doctrine, and their Comtism is so variable as to be indefinable.

Positivism is a hopelessly ambiguous term, and has been claimed by and applied to diverse and dissimilar theories. Some consider themselves positivists because they are positive that matter is the only reality; others because they are positive that sensation is the source and measure of all knowledge; others because they are positive that there is no God, no soul, and no future life; others because they are positive that there is nothing positively certain; and others for other reasons.

Note XXI., page 193.

Positivist Law of Three States.

Mr J. Morley and Dr Paulsen have expressed their dissent from my views as to Comte's so-called "law of three states," but neither of them has really dealt with the facts which I adduced as irreconcilable with it. My account of its history has been abundantly confirmed by M. Pillon in Nos. 6, 8, 10, 11, 23, 24, and 25, of the 'Critique Philosophique' for 1875. These articles gave much offence to M. Audiffrent, Robinet, Sémerie, and the orthodox positivists generally, but they are quite accurate and conclusive.

Dr Paulsen's reason (see his able review of my 'Philosophy of History' in the 'Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie,' Bd. 8, Hft. 4) for maintaining the consistency of Comte's alleged law with theism, is that theism is a form of belief, but not a kind of knowledge. There is here involved a twofold oversight: for, first, Comte's law is not a law of states of knowledge but of states of belief; and, second, the assertion that theism is belief but not knowledge is unproved, and stands in great need of proof.

The inadequacy and self-contradictions of the so-called law of three states will be found clearly pointed out in Shield's 'Philosophia Ultima,' vol. i., pt. ii., ch. ii., pp. 287-314; and in Caird's 'Social Philosophy of Comte.'

Note XXII., page 209.

The Positivist Religion.

There is an excellent account of the Comtist religion, and much interesting information as to its history, in the essay "Positivism" in Principal Tulloch's 'Modern Theories in Philosophy and Religion.'

As to the French orthodox positivists, M. Ribot remarks,—"Many of them are animated with a truly religious faith, and I have heard them speak with an enthusiasm worthy of the brightest epoch of the middle age." They can hardly surpass in zeal and unction some of their English brethren. The 'Sermons' of Mr Congreve, and the articles of Mr Harrison on the religious aspects of positivism, show pulpit qualifications of a very high order, and especially a fervour which reminds one sometimes of Jeremy Taylor, and sometimes of Samuel Rutherford.

Dr M'Cosh's 'Positivism and Christianity' is less rhetorical but more reasonable. Mr C. Staniland Wake, in 'The Evolution of Morality,' vol. ii. ch. viii., takes, perhaps, somewhat too favourable a view of the "Religion of Humanity." He recognises, however, the defects in Comte's conception of the Grand-Être, and justly insists that the merits which it possesses are ethical rather than religious.

NOTE XXIII., page 232.

HISTORY OF SECULARISM.

Jeremy Bentham, James Mill, Thomas Paine, Robert Taylor, Richard Carlile, and Robert Owen, may be described as those who directly prepared the way for the secularist movement. Bentham and Mill did so by the manner in which they inculcated utilitarianism and political reform, not by the explicit avowal of their atheistical opinions. As to their attitude towards religion, see Professor Bain's remarks in 'Mind,' vol. ii. p. 527, and J. S. Mill's Autobiography, pp. 38-44, 69, 70. The attacks of Paine, Taylor, and Carlile on Christianity were animated by a spirit which could not stop short of bitter antagonism to all religion. There is a memoir of Paine by Cheetham (1809), and another by Rickman (1815); an account of Taylor in Iconoclast, and Watts' 'Half-Hours with the Freethinkers;' and a notice of Carlile, by Holyoake (1853). Paine and Taylor professed to be deists; the latest creed of Carlile was a kind of naturalism presented in a strange semi-scriptural phraseology. Paine's views must be sought for in his Theological Works; Taylor's in the 'Devil's Pulpit' and 'Diegesis;' and Carlile's in the volumes of the 'Republican,' 'Lion,' 'Christian Warrior,' &c. The influence of the benevolent utopianist, Robert Owen, was decidedly secularist and anti-religious. He identified God with nature, or at least with "the mysterious power in nature which permeates every particle of the elements which compose the universe." A list of his principal works will be found in Mr Holyoake's notice of his 'Life and Last Days' (1859).

Perhaps the earliest periodical organ of popular atheism in this country was the 'Oracle of Reason,' the first number of which appeared in November 6, 1841, and the last on December 2, 1843. In the course of its brief existence it had four editors—Charles Southwell, George Jacob Holyoake, Thomas Paterson, and William Chilton, the first three being in rapid succession imprisoned for blasphemy. Mr Southwell, when his term of imprisonment was expired, started, in 1842, the 'Investigator;' and in 1843 'The Movement' succeeded the 'Oracle of Reason.' These periodicals advocated opinions of the same kind as those which are at present maintained in more temperate and becoming language by the 'National Reformer,' 'Secular Review,' and 'Liberal.' Their chief contributors may be said to have been the representatives of the first generation of secularists. Mr Holyoake is probably the only one of them of any note still alive. In 'Half-Hours with Freethinkers' there is an account of Mr Charles Southwell; also of Mrs Emma Martin, who likewise belonged to the earliest secularist group.

In 1851 Mr Holyoake first made use of the term "Secularist," as more appropriate and distinctive than "Atheist;" and in 1852 he commenced organising the English freethinkers according to the principles of secularism. For a short time he had an ally in Mr Thomas Cooper, but in 1856 this honest and courageous man became convinced of the truth of Christianity. Mr Holyoake edited for many years a periodical called the 'Reasoner.' His most interesting work is, 'The Trial of Theism' (1858). I willingly acknowledge that it contains much which is suggestive, and much even which is true and important, although I naturally deem its criticism of theism very inconclusive. Of Mr Holyoake's

discussions the best known, perhaps, are the Cooper Street and the Glasgow discussions with the Rev. Brewin Grant, the discussion with the Rev. Mr Townley, and the discussion with Mr Bradlaugh. The biographical and critical essay of Sophia Dobson Collet, entitled "George Jacob Holyoake and Modern Atheism" (1855), is well worthy of perusal. Mr Austin Holyoake has aided his brother in attacking Christianity and theism, and is the author of "Thoughts on Atheism," "Does there Exist a Moral Governor of the Universe?" and several other pamphlets.

Among the most active and prominent secularists of a later date, the following may be mentioned: 1. Charles Bradlaugh, President of the National Secular Society, editor of the 'National Reformer,' author of 'The Free-thinkers' Text-book,' pt. i.; 'A Plea for Atheism;' and many political and anti-religious pamphlets. Mr Bradlaugh displayed great controversial activity. Of his numerous discussions, I may mention these: (*a*) The Credibility and Morality of the Four Gospels. The authorised and verbatim Report of the Five Nights' Discussion, at Halifax, between the Rev. T. D. Matthias, Baptist Minister, and Iconoclast: London, 1860. (*b*) A Discussion on the question, Has Man a Soul? between the Rev. T. Lawson of Bacup, and Iconoclast of London: Manchester, 1861. (*c*) Christianity and Secularism; Report of a Public Discussion between Mr W. Hutchings and Mr C. Bradlaugh, held in the Public Hall, Wigan, on February 4 and 5, 1861, on the question, Whether is Christianity or Secularism best calculated to promote human happiness? Wigan, 1861. (*d*) A Full Report of the Discussion between Mr Mackie (editor of the 'Warrington Guardian') and Iconoclast (Mr Bradlaugh) in

the Music Hall, Warrington, April 10 and 11, 1861, on the question, What does the Bible teach about God? London: Ward & Co. (*e*) The Existence of God: A Discussion between Rev. Woodville Woodman, Minister of the New Jerusalem Church, Kersley, Lancashire, and Iconoclast, editor of the 'National Reformer,' held at Wigan, on February 18 to 21, 1861. London: J. S. Hodson. (*f*) Is the Bible a Divine Revelation? A Discussion between Rev. W. Woodman and Iconoclast, held at Ashton-under-Lyne, on October 21st, 22d, 28th, and 29th: London, 1861. (*g*) Modern Atheism and the Bible: Report of the Discussion between the Rev. W. Barker, Minister of Church Street Chapel, Blackfriars, and Iconoclast, editor of the 'National Reformer,' held at Cowper Street Schoolroom, September 1862: London. (*h*) Two Nights' Public Discussion between Thomas Cooper and Charles Bradlaugh, on the Being of a God as the Maker and Moral Governor of the Universe, at the Hall of Science, London, February 1 and 2, 1864. (*i*) What does Christian Theism Teach? verbatim Report of the Two Nights' Discussion between the Rev. A. J. Harrison and C. Bradlaugh: London, 1872. (*j*) South Place Debate between Rev. B. Grant and C. Bradlaugh: London, 1875. For a Church of England clergyman's view of Mr Bradlaugh and the Secular Movement, see 'Heterodox London,' by Dr Maurice Davies.

2. Charles Watts, editor of the 'Secular Review,' author of "Christian Evidences Criticised," "Why am I an Atheist?" "Secularism in its Various Relations," and other pamphlets. Of the discussions in which he has taken part, those of which I have seen reports are: (*a*) Debate on the Christian Evidences between Mr C.

Watts and B. H. Cooper, Esq., at Stratford, February 16 and 23, 1871: London. (*b*) Full Report of the Public Discussion on the question, Is the Belief in an Infinite Personal Being Reasonable and Beneficial? between the Rev. Wm. Adamson, Evangelical Union Minister, Edinburgh, and Mr C. Watts, Accredited Agent of the National Secular Society, London, in the New Waverley Hall, Edinburgh, on 4th and 5th of March 1872: Glasgow and London. (*c*) Four Nights' Public Discussion between the Rev. A. Stewart (of Aberdeen) and Mr C. Watts, on,—Is the Belief in the Being of an Infinite Personal God Reasonable? and Are the Four Gospels Authentic and worthy of Credit? London, 1873.

3. George William Foote, editor of the 'Liberal,' and author of 'Secularism Restated,' &c. He seeks to follow a *via media* between the paths of Mr Holyoake and Mr Bradlaugh.

4. Annie Besant, who has written Part II. of the 'Freethinkers' Text-book,' 'My Path to Atheism,' 'History of the Great French Revolution,' 'The Gospel of Atheism,' and various pamphlets. These works display talents which might have done much service in a good cause. Mrs Besant has now become a theosophist.

The anti-secularist position is well defended by the Rev. Mr Adamson, Mr Hutchings, the Rev. T. Lawson, and the Rev. Mr Woodman, in the discussions above mentioned, and by Dr Sexton in his 'Fallacies of Secularism.' To the Rev. Professor Blaikie we owe two excellent papers—"Christianity and the Life that now is," and "Christianity and Secularism compared in their influence and effects"—which have appeared as Nos. 4 and 7 of 'Present Day Tracts.' I am not aware that there is any good history of Secularism.

Note XXIV., page 249.

The Atheism of Secularism.

I have not dealt specially with the arguments employed by secularists in favour of atheism, because there is nothing special in these arguments.

Mr Holyoake's attempt to overthrow the design argument by extending it, is the most original and distinctive portion of his reasoning against theism. It will be found in his 'Paley Refuted,' 'Trial of Theism,' 'Discussion with Townley,' &c. Conceding for his purpose that the design argument proves the personality of a Designer, he contends that all analogy and experience prove that every *person* is *organised*—that wherever there is intelligence there must be a brain, senses, and nerves—and concludes that the organisation of Deity must teem with marks of design, not less than other organisations, and consequently that Deity can only be thought of as a being who has had a maker. If the view I have given of the design argument be correct, such reasoning as this is obviously irrelevant. The design argument is from order to intelligence, and to intelligence only. Its inference is in no degree or respect to organisation—to brain, senses, and nerves.

Miss Collet, in the essay mentioned in the previous note, has some interesting remarks on Mr Holyoake's argument; and Dr J. Buchanan, in 'Faith in God and Modern Atheism,' vol. ii. pp. 242-261, refutes it in a most elaborate manner.

This singular argument, which Mr Holyoake many years ago rendered familiar to English working men, has

recently been reproduced by the late Prof. Clifford and the distinguished German physiologist Du Bois-Reymond, and addressed by them to scientifically educated persons. I quote the words of Du Bois-Reymond in order to have the pleasure of quoting also a part of the admirable reply given to them by Dr Martineau. Du Bois-Reymond's words are: "What can you say then to the student of nature if, before he allows a psychical principle to the universe, he asks to be shown, somewhere within it, embedded in neurine and fed with warm arterial blood under proper pressure, a convolution of ganglionic globules and nerve-tubes proportioned in size to the faculties of such a mind." Dr Martineau's words are: "'What can we say?' I say, first of all, that this demand for a Divine brain and nerves and arteries comes strangely from those who reproach the theist with 'anthropomorphism.' In order to believe in God, they must be assured that the plates in 'Quain's Anatomy' truly represent Him. If it be a disgrace to religion to take the human as measure of the Divine, what place in the scale of honour can we assign to this stipulation? Next, I ask my questioner whether he suspends belief in his friend's mental powers till he has made sure of the contents of their crania? and whether, in the case of ages beyond reach, there are no other adequate vestiges of intellectual and moral life in which he places a ready trust? *Immediate* knowledge of mind other than his own he can never have: its existence in other cases is gathered from the signs of its activity, whether in personal lineaments or in products stamped with thought: and to stop this process of inference with the discovery of *human* beings is altogether arbitrary, till it is shown that the grounds for extending it are inadequate. Further, I

would submit that, in dealing with the problem of the Universal Mind, this demand for organic centralisation is strangely inappropriate. It is when mental power has to be localised, bounded, lent out to individual natures, and assigned to a scene of definite relations, that a focus must be found for it, and a molecular structure with determinate periphery be built for its lodgment. And were Du Bois-Reymond himself ever to alight on the portentous cerebrum which he imagines, I greatly doubt whether he would fulfil his promise and turn theist at the sight: that he had found the Cause of causes would be the last inference it would occur to him to draw: rather would he look round for some monstrous *creature*, some kosmic megatherium, born to float and pasture on the fields of space. . . . Quite in the sense of Du Bois-Reymond's objection was the saying of Laplace, that in scanning the whole heaven with the telescope he found no God; which again has its parallel in Lawrence's remark that the scalpel, in opening the brain, came upon no soul. Both are unquestionably true, and it is precisely the truth of the second which vitiates the intended inference from the first. Had the scalpel alighted on some perceptible ψυχή, we might have required of the telescope to do the same; and, on its bringing in a dumb report, have concluded that there was only mechanism there. But, in spite of the knife's failure, we positively know that conscious thought and will were present, yet no more visible, yesterday: and so, that the telescope misses all but the bodies of the universe and their light, avails nothing to prove the absence of a Living Mind through all. If you take the wrong instruments, such *quaesita* may well evade you. The test-tube will not detect an insincerity, or the micro-

scope analyse a grief. The organism of nature, like that of the brain, lies open, in its external features, to the scrutiny of science; but, on the inner side, the life of both is reserved for other modes of apprehension, of which the base is self-consciousness and the crown is religion."—'Modern Materialism,' pp. 66-69.

The most distinctive and peculiar feature, perhaps, in the atheism of Mr Bradlaugh, is the extent to which it is rested on the notion of substance enunciated by Spinoza in the definition—"Substance is that which exists in itself, and is conceived *per se;* in other words, the conception of which does not require the conception of anything else antecedent to it." It is strange that Mr Bradlaugh should not have seen that this notion, this definition, implies that we can have *a priori* and absolute knowledge, and is utterly incompatible with the doctrine that all our knowledge is relative and based on the senses. If he can conceive substance *per se*, and not merely through its qualities, effects, and relationships to his own faculties, he is logically bound to abandon sensationalism and all its consequences, and betake himself to absolute idealism or to mysticism. Indeed, following in the footsteps of Spinoza, he actually treads for a short distance the high *a priori* road, without apparently being aware that he is on it, and gets as far as the conclusion that there is only one substance. It is to be regretted that he should not have more carefully inquired *whether there is even one.* I have never seen it proved that there is even one substance in Spinoza's sense of the term. Defining substance in the way indicated, the creation or origination of substance is, of course, absolutely inconceivable to Mr Bradlaugh. If we mean by substance only what is self-existent, the creation of substance is a

manifestly self-contradictory expression, equivalent to the origination of the unoriginated.

"Substance" is not the only metaphysical spectre which haunts the mind and disturbs the reasonings of Mr Bradlaugh. "Infinity" is nearly as bad. In fact, for a person possessed of a typically English intellect, Mr Bradlaugh shows, in dealing with theism, a curious predilection for metaphysical conundrums. As a good example of this, I may adduce the reasoning by which he endeavours, in a criticism of my volume on 'Theism (see 'National Reformer,' Dec. 23, 1877), to show that the universe cannot have been originated by God. "This new universe," he says, "was either better than God, or it was worse than God, or it was identical with God. But it could not have been better than the infinitely perfect. Nor can the infinitely good be conceived as capable of resulting in that which was a deterioration. Nor can the theory of absolute sameness be maintained, as this would render it impossible to distinguish between the creator and the created." From this argument, it would appear that Mr Bradlaugh's idea of an infinitely perfect Being is that of a Being unable to produce any finite effect. According to his view, infinite perfection is equivalent to utter weakness. This rivals Hegel's 'Being and Not-Being are the Same.' Mr Bradlaugh thus proceeds: "This new universe must have been something added to that which existed prior to its origination, or it was nothing added. But the instant you conceive something added to God, you fatally impugn His infinity, or you succeed in affirming infinity and the new universe added to it—which is nonsense." Let Mr Bradlaugh try another application of this reasoning, and he will hardly fail to see that it is a mere metaphysical

cobweb. He himself exists, and, being of a certain size, fills a certain amount of space. Yet before he existed, space was infinite, and whether he existed or not space would be infinite. Does his existence, then, fatally impugn the infinity of space? And unless it be nonsense to affirm infinity and Mr Bradlaugh added to it, why should it be nonsense to affirm infinity and the universe added to it? Mr Bradlaugh continues: "You affirm that the universe owes its existence to the reason and will of God—that is, that the universe did not always exist, but that God reasoned about it and decided that it should exist. Now, as the universe did not always exist, prior to its origination its non-existence must have been reasonable or unreasonable to God. But it cannot be supposed that the infinitely wise and powerful would have endured the unreasonable; therefore, while the universe did not yet exist, its non-existence must have been reasonable. But if it ever were unreasonable that the universe should exist, and if God was then the sole infinite existence, and infinitely wise, it would have always been unreasonable that the universe should originate, and there would never have been any creation." It is hardly necessary to point out that Mr Bradlaugh here confounds reason with reasoning. No intelligent man thinks or speaks of God as reasoning. But stranger even than this oversight is the conception of infinite wisdom implied in Mr Bradlaugh's argument. Infinite wisdom is assumed to be incompatible with the origination of anything finite at a definite time. If so, infinite wisdom must be much inferior to human wisdom in its humblest form.

There is an impression in some quarters that atheism is advocated in a weak and unskilful manner by the chiefs

of secularism. It is an impression in which I do not share. Most of the writers who are striving to diffuse atheism in literary circles are not to be compared in intellectual strength with either Mr Holyoake or Mr Bradlaugh. The working men of England may be assured that they have heard from the secularists nearly everything in behalf of atheism which is at all plausible.

Note XXV., page 253.

Darwinism and the Universality of Religion.

Darwinians are obviously not logically bound to deny that religion is a universal characteristic of the human race. They may even quite consistently maintain that traces of it will be found not only among all tribes of men, but among various species of animals. And this is what several of them actually hold.

Mr Darwin himself merely ventures to suggest that the dog is susceptible of "a distant approach" to religious emotion. He says: "The feeling of religious devotion is a highly complex one, consisting of love, complete submission to an exalted and mysterious superior, a strong sense of dependence, fear, reverence, gratitude, hope for the future, and perhaps other elements. No being could experience so complex an emotion until advanced in his intellectual and moral faculties to at least a moderately high level. Nevertheless we see some distant approach to this state of mind in the deep love of a dog for his master, associated with complete submission, some fear, and

perhaps other feelings." Not a few evolutionists go much farther, and, indeed, represent as evidences of religion all the tokens of confidence and gratitude towards man displayed by the lower animals. M. Houzeau ('Études sur les Facultés Mentales des Animaux,' pp. 271-273) thinks that there are many persons and even peoples not so religious as the dog.

As to this view, it may suffice to say that trust and gratitude are not in themselves religious emotions. They only become so when their objects are, or are supposed to be, supernatural beings. A man's confidence in and affection to a fellow-man are not religious emotions. Why, then, should a beast's confidence in or affection towards a man be so designated? A man is not to a dog an invisible being, an agent inaccessible to its senses. It may be replied that the object of man's worship may be a visible being, and that, in fact, numerous peoples adore stones, plants, and animals. If the religion of a man may display itself in the worship of a beast, why should not a beast show itself to be religious in the worship of a man? The answer is that a man never worships a beast merely as a beast; while we have no reason to suppose that a beast in trusting or loving a man regards him as anything else than a man. When a man worships a beast, he worships it not as what it really is, but as the type or symbol, the mask or embodiment, of a Divine Being. It is some unseen agent—some mysterious power—manifested in, or at least somehow associated with, the beast, that he really adores. Low, therefore, as his worship is, there is a spiritual sense—a consciousness of the Invisible and Divine—at the root of it. Can it be shown that there is anything of the kind in a dog when it fawns upon a

man, or in a horse when, by neighing, it solicits human assistance? Unless this is shown, the act of a human being adoring even a beast must be held to be utterly unlike any act of a beast towards a man.

Note XXVI., page 263.

Alleged Atheism of South American Tribes.

The words of Spix and Martius are as follows: "Chained to the present, he (the Brazilian Indian) hardly ever raises his eyes to the starry firmament. Yet he is actuated by a certain awe of some constellations, as of everything that indicates a spiritual connection of things. His chief attention, however, is not directed to the sun, but to the moon, according to which he calculates time, and from which he is used to deduce good and evil. As all that is good passes without notice by him, and only what is disagreeable makes an impression on him, he acknowledges no cause of good, or no God, but only an evil principle which meets him sometimes in the form of a lizard, of a man with stag's feet, of a crocodile, or an ounce; sometimes transforms itself into a swamp, &c.; leads him astray, vexes him, brings him into difficulty and danger, and even kills him. They ascribe a direct intercourse with the demons to their pajé, who is acquainted with many powerful herbs, appears to be at the same time their priest and physician, and contrives to maintain his credit among them by all kinds of conjuring tricks. In extraordinary cases he is applied to for his advice, which he gives, after con

sulting the demons, for which purpose he generally uses a dark tempestuous night. Certain animals, for instance, a kind of goatsucker, and the screaming kinds of vulture, caracarai, and caoha, are messengers from the dead to the pajé, and therefore highly respected by everybody." —'Travels in Brazil,' b. iv. ch. ii.

What Mr Wallace says is: "I cannot make out that they have any belief that can be called a religion. They appear to have no definite idea of a God; if asked who they think made the rivers, and the forests, and the sky, they will reply that they do not know, or sometimes that they suppose that it was 'Tupanan,' a word that appears to answer to God, but of which they understand nothing. They have much more definite ideas of a bad spirit, 'Jurapari,' or Devil, whom they fear, and endeavour through their pajés to propitiate. When it thunders they say the 'Jurapari' is angry, and their idea of natural death is that the Jurapari kills them. At an eclipse they believe that this bad spirit is killing the moon, and they make all the noise they can to frighten him away."— 'Travels on the Amazons and Rio Negro,' p. 530: 1853.

The statement of Mr Bates ('The Naturalist on the River Amazons,' vol. ii. ch. iii., pp. 162, 163, 1863) is substantially identical with that of Mr Wallace, his fellow-traveller. The only definite information in it is that the Indian Vicente did not know the cause of lightning, and had never reflected on who made the sun, stars, and trees. If Vicente had known the cause of lightning he must have been more learned than a European *savant* before the time of Franklin; and if he had meditated on the maker of the sun, stars, and trees, his religion must have been of a more thoughtful character than that of the ordinary ancient Greek or Roman.

If Ebrard's view (see 'Apologetik,' ii. 359 and 366) of the Malayan origin of the Tupi tribes of South America could be established, it would follow that these tribes must have gradually fallen away from the worship of one supreme god, Tupan. No one, I think, who has not a theory to maintain, can consider the circumstances in which most of the Brazilian Indian tribes are placed without coming to the conclusion that they must have sunk from a higher intellectual and religious level. Small colonies of English or Irish peasants placed in the same circumstances would be certain to degenerate rapidly.

NOTE XXVII., page 265.

ALLEGED ATHEISM OF NORTH AMERICAN TRIBES.

For the evidence which Waitz has collected as to the religion of the Indians of California, see 'Anthropologie der Naturvölker,' Bd. iv. pp. 243, 244. Father Baegert's account will be found in the Smithsonian Transactions, 1863-64, and Father Boscana's in Bancroft's 'Native Races of the Western States of America,' vol. iii. pp. 161-170.

The works of Bancroft, Müller, and Waitz are those which contain most information on the religion of the North American tribes, although the publications of Catlin, Schoolcraft, &c., still retain their value. Dr Brinton's 'Myths of the New World' (1868) is not always as convincing as it is interesting.

It is to be regretted that Müller should have adopted a theory which has so little real foundation as that the

worship of ghosts is characteristic of northern tribes and cold regions, and the worship of the sun of southern tribes and warm regions. This theory—which would require Senegambia, for example, to be extremely cold—injuriously affects his exposition, and still more his explanation of facts. But his constant exaggeration of the power of physical influences and comparative neglect of the operation of historical causes do not prevent his work from being valuable as a collection of materials.

NOTE XXVIII., page 269.

ALLEGED ATHEISM OF POLYNESIANS AND AUSTRALASIANS.

Jukes was only a single day on Dalrymple or Damood Island. He found that the people had neat and good huts, and he saw a building different from, and much superior to, any of the rest. After describing it, he says: "Whether this was their temple, their place for depositing the dead, or a chief's house, we could not make out. We, however, saw no appearance of any chief, or of one man exercising authority among them; neither could we discover any traces of religious belief or observance."—'Voyage of H.M.S. Fly,' vol. i. p. 164. This testimony is supposed by Sir J. Lubbock to be evidence that the Damood Islanders are atheists.

Captain Wilson was unfavourably circumstanced for making inquiries into the religion of the Pellew Islanders; but no one, I think, who reads the interesting pages (216-220) which he has devoted to the subject in his

Account of the Pellew Islands,' will fail to find Sir J. Lubbock's view of his evidence inaccurate.

Mr Wallace was six weeks at Wanumbai, and all that he tells us of his residence there (see the 'Malay Archipelago,' vol. ii. ch. xxxi.) is confirmatory of his own statement, that "he could not get much real knowledge of the customs of its people." He was himself, however, regarded as a sorcerer, who would make his dead birds and beasts live again when he returned to England, and who had caused the unusual spell of good weather which coincided with his visit.

The following works throw much light on the character of Polynesian beliefs: Sir George Grey's 'Polynesian Mythology' (1855), Rev. R. Taylor's 'Te Ika a Mani' (1855), Waitz, vol. v., Fornander's 'Account of the Polynesian Race,' vol. i., and the Rev. Mr Gill's 'Myths and Songs from the South Pacific Islands' (1876). They show that savages who have been supposed to have no religious conceptions have had really a rich mythology, resting on metaphysical ideas about the source and development and order of existences, such as *a priori* theorists and rash generalisers would have assuredly declared could never have entered a savage mind.

The most widely diffused Polynesian term for God is *atua.* According to Mr Gill, it signifies *kernel*, *pith*, or *life*, God being conceived of as *the core of the world* and *the life of humanity*; according to Mr Taylor, *beyond*, *as a man's shadow—hence a spirit*, *God*, *or anything beyond our comprehension.* Max Müller ('Hibbert Lectures,' pp. 89, 90) expresses himself very decidedly in favour of the view of Mr Gill.

From a "Report on Australian Languages and Traditions" in the 'Journal of the Anthropological Institute,

Feb. 1878, I make the following extracts. The Rev. C. C. Greenway, speaking of the Kamiloroi, says: "Baiami, Baiame, or Bhiahmee, is regarded as the maker of all things. The names signify 'maker' or 'cutter out,' from the verb *bhai*, *baialli*, *baia*. He is regarded as the rewarder or punisher of men, according to their conduct. He sees all, and knows all, if not directly, through the subordinate deity of Turramūlan, who presides at the Bora. Bhaiami is said to have been once on the earth. Turramūlan is meditator in all the operations of Bhaiami upon man, and in all man's transactions with Bhami. 'Turramūlan' means 'leg on one side only,' one-legged. Turramūlan has a wife called Muni Burribian—that is, egg or life, and milk or nourishing—who has charge of the instruction and supervision of women. For women may not see or hear Turramūlan on pain of death. The 'tohī' (smoke, spirit, heart, central life)—that which speaks, thinks, determines within man—does not die with the body, but ascends to Bhaiami, or transmigrates into some other form. It may be a *wandah* (*wunda*) or spirit wandering about the earth. The 'bunna,' flesh or material part, perishes; the 'wundah' may become a white man. The transmigration of the 'tohī' is generally to a superior condition; but those who are very wicked go to a more degraded and miserable condition." Mr Thomas Honery, writing of the Wailwun people, reports: "Bai-ame made all things. He first made man at the Murula (a mountain between the Narran and the Barwon). Bai-ame once lived among men. There is, in the stony ridges between the Barwon and the Narran, a hole in a rock, in the shape of a man, two or three times as large as an ordinary man, where Bai-ame used to go to rest himself. He

had a large tribe around him there, whom he fed at a place called 'Mīdūl.' Suddenly he vanished from them and went up to heaven. Still, though unseen, he provides them with food, making the grass to grow. They believe that he will come back to them at some future time." Of the aborigines on the Page and the Isis, we are told that they believe that "the deity who comes down at their 'Bora' is very good and very powerful. He is very ancient, but never gets older. He saves them by his strength. He can pull trees up by the roots and remove mountains. If anything attacks them he tears it to pieces." In the language of Illawarre, "Mirrirul" is the word for God. "The people say that 'Mirrirul' made all things. Their old men have told them that there is, beyond death, a large tree, on which Mirrirul stands to receive them when they die. The good he takes up to the sky, the bad he sends to another place to be punished."

In the same number of the above-mentioned journal, Mr C. H. E. Carmichael draws attention to the account given by Monsignor Salvado of the Benedictine Mission in New Nursia, in Western Australia. It was long before the Benedictines ascertained that the natives had any religious beliefs, as regarding these beliefs they were "singularly and obstinately reticent." Ultimately, according to Monsignor Salvado, it was found that "they believe in an Omnipotent Being, creator of heaven and earth, whom they call Motogon, and whom they imagined as a very tall, powerful, and wise man of their own country and complexion. His mode of creation was by breathing: *e.g.*, to create the earth, he said, 'Earth, come forth,'—and he breathed, and the earth was created. So with the sun, the trees, the kangaroo,

&c. Motogon, the author of good, is confronted with Cienga, the author of evil. This latter being is unchainer of the whirlwind and the storm, and the invisible author of the death of their children; wherefore the natives fear him exceedingly. What is remarkable, however, is, that although the natives believe themselves to be afflicted by Cienga, they do nothing to propitiate him. When a sudden thunderstorm comes upon them, they raise hideous cries, strike the earth with their feet, imprecate death and misfortune upon Cienga, whom they think the author of it, and then take refuge under the nearest trees. The general belief is, that Cienga prowls about at night among the trees; and for this reason the natives can scarcely be got to stir from their fire after sunset. Only mothers who have lately lost a child will brave these dangers to go in quest of its soul, and if they hear the cry of a bird in the bush, will spend hours there calling upon it and begging it to come to them. So strong is the Australian mother's love."

NOTE XXIX., page 274.

ALLEGED ATHEISM OF AFRICAN TRIBES.

The second volume of Waitz's 'Anthropology' gives by far the best general view of African religions. I should have attempted to summarise his statements, had this not been already and recently done by Professor Max Müller in his Hibbert Lectures. The facts collected by Waitz show not only that all the African peoples regarding which we possess any considerable amount

of information have religious conceptions, but that the belief in a Supreme Being is very widely spread among them.

The travels of Baker, Barth, Cameron, Grant, Speke, and Stanley have not contributed greatly to our knowledge of the religions of the peoples they visited. Their not seeing in certain cases traces of religion, may perhaps be some slight evidence that what is called fetichism is not prevalent in districts which they traversed.

Sir Samuel Baker says of the Dinkas, Shilluks, Nuehrs, and other White Nile tribes, that "they are without a belief in a Supreme Being, neither have they any form of worship or idolatry, nor is the darkness of their minds enlightened by even a ray of superstition." But as Mr Tylor ('Primitive Culture,' vol. i. pp. 423, 424) has pointed out, the religions of these very tribes have been described by Kaufmann, Brun-Rollet, Lejean, and other travellers. All the evidence which Sir Samuel produces for the atheism of the Latukas is a conversation with the chief Commoro regarding the future life and the resurrection. — See 'Albert N'Yanza,' vol. i. pp. 246-250. The impression which the report of the conversation leaves on my mind is, that Commoro was not frankly stating his own views, but trying to ascertain those of his interrogator. Even if this were not the case, however, his disbelief of a future life was obviously a conclusion arrived at through considerable reflection. When Sir Samuel made a mistaken application of St Paul's metaphor of the grain of wheat, Commoro detected the fallacy at once. Sir Samuel was, in consequence, obliged to "give up the religious argument as a failure;" but instead of inferring that here was a Latuka Hume or Bradlaugh, whose very scepticism plainly implied

religious thought, he concluded that "in this wild, naked savage" ("one of the most clever and common-sense savages that I had seen in these countries," says he elsewhere), "there was not even a superstition upon which to found a religious feeling."

Probably the best work on the Hottentots, Bushmen, and Kaffirs is G. Fritsch's 'Eingeborenen Süd-Afrikas,' 1872. Canon Callaway's account of the religion of the Kaffirs is well known; also Casalis' work on the Bassutos. The sketches of the religion of the Hottentots by Prichard in his 'Natural History of Man' and 'Researches' are very much superior to most of the later accounts. The celebrated missionary Robert Moffat affirms that the Bechuanas, Kaffirs, &c., have no religion; yet in chapters xv. and xvi. of his 'Missionary Labours and Scenes in South Africa' he supplies a considerable amount of evidence to the contrary.

Note XXX., page 275.

Alleged Atheism of Esquimaux.

Probably the best account of the religion of the Esquimaux will be found in the introduction to Dr H. Rink's 'Tales and Traditions of the Eskimo,'—see pp. 35-64. According to it, few traces of ideas as to the origin and early history of the world and the supreme powers are discoverable among them. They believe, however, that the whole visible world is ruled by powers or "owners," each of which is an *inua*—a person or soul.

They divide it into an upper and under world, and suppose the latter to be the best, because it is warm and rich in food. Its inhabitants are called the *arsissut*—*i.e.*, those who live in abundance. Souls which go to the upper world are imagined to suffer from cold and hunger. They are called the *assartut*—*i.e.*, ball-players; and the aurora borealis is ascribed to their being engaged in their favourite occupation. The supreme ruler dwells with the happy deceased in the under world, and makes the subordinate rulers helping spirits, or *tornat*, to the *angakut*. A secondary deity, represented as a female, is credited with sending forth all animals needed for food. Witchcraft is distinguished from the power of the *angakut*, and, being deemed selfish and evil, is punished. The Esquimaux have prayers, invocations, spells, amulets, and a priesthood. Religious belief is the chief connecting-link between their scattered tribes.

Note XXXI., page 279.

Sir J. Lubbock's Miscellaneous Instances of Atheistical Peoples.

Dobrizhoffer's work was originally published in Latin at Vienna in 1784, but there is an English translation of it by Sara Coleridge—'An Account of the Abipones, an Equestrian People of Paraguay,' 3 vols., 1822.

That the Hottentots, as Kolben reports, not only worshipped the moon, but believed in a higher deity, is distinctly testified to by G. Schmidt, Ziegenbalg, Kolb,

and other missionaries. The Kaffirs have derived some of their chief religious conceptions from the Hottentots. Thus the Kaffir Unkulunkulu has originated in the Hottentot Heitsi-eibib, or moon-god—a fact which renders very doubtful the conjecture of Mr Spencer and others, that the former is to be regarded as merely a deified ancestor. Among the names by which the Kaffirs express their highest and most general apprehension of divinity —Utixo (the inflicter of pain), Umdali (the shaper or former), and Umenzi (the creator)—the first has been adopted from the Hottentots.

Colonel Dalton's account of the Khasias will be found in pp. 54-58 of the work already mentioned, and Colonel Yule's Note on the Khasia Hills and people in No. 152 of the Asiatic Society's Journal (1844). Hooker's account (vol. ii. pp. 273-277) is drawn mainly from the information of Mr Inglis, and quite agrees with that in Yule's Note. His words as to the religion of the Khasias are certainly curious, but Sir John Lubbock's use of them is much more so. The words are,—"The Khasias are superstitious, but have no religion; like the Lepchas, they believe in a Supreme Being, and in deities of the grove, cave, and stream."

Note XXXII., page 289.

Polytheism.

The author at one time hoped to devote two lectures to polytheism, and to the theories which have been promulgated regarding its origin, nature, and evolution, but

he has found it necessary to leave these subjects undiscussed, at least for the present. Had the limits of this work allowed of their consideration, he would have endeavoured to show that the view of the character and conditions of theistic proof given in the third lecture of 'Theism' affords the only foundation for a true and comprehensive theory of the natural development of religion. In the last volume of his 'Philosophy of History' he will have an opportunity of examining whether the hypotheses as to henotheism, animism, fetichism, spiritism, the succession of the simpler phases of religion, &c., as held by Max Müller, Mr Spencer, Mr Tylor, Sir John Lubbock, and others, are psychologically well founded and historically justified or not.

Note XXXIII., page 333.

Pessimism.

Mr Sully's 'Pessimism' (1877) is the ablest work—whether regarded as a history or a criticism—which has yet been written on the subject of which it treats. It is especially rich in excellent psychological observations and suggestions. In the lecture I have felt constrained strongly to express dissent from Mr Sully on one important point, but I cordially rejoice that there is in our language such a work to which the student of pessimism can be referred.

As to the history of pessimism, besides Mr Sully's first eight chapters, Huber's 'Pessimismus' and Gass's 'Optimismus und Pessimismus' may be consulted.

On Buddhism there are admirable works by Burnouf, Saint Hilaire, Stanislas Julien, Feer, Sénart, Köppen, Wassiljew, Schiefner, Spence Hardy, Rhys Davids, Oldenberg, &c.

The collected edition of Schopenhauer's works by Frauenstädt is in seven volumes. Some translations from them have appeared in the 'Journal of Speculative Philosophy,' edited by W. T. Harris. For biographical information respecting their author see Gwinner's 'Arthur Schopenhauer, aus persönlichen Umgange dargestellt,' Frauenstädt and Lindner's 'Arthur Schopenhauer, von ihm, über ihn,' and Miss Zimmern's 'Arthur Schopenhauer.' The German books, pamphlets, lectures, articles, &c., on Schopenhauer and his system are very numerous. Among English criticisms of his philosophy one of the best is Professor Adamson's in 'Mind,' No. 4. There is an excellent French work on 'La Philosophie de Schopenhauer,' by M. Ribot.

Von Hartmann has given us a brief autobiography which will be found in his 'Gesammelte Studien.' His 'Philosophie des Unbewussten' is stereotyped in its seventh edition. The ablest examinations of it known to me are O. Schmidt's 'Naturwissenschaftliche Grundlagen der Philosophie des Unbewussten,' Renouvier's articles in the 'Critique Philosophique,' Année iii., and Bonatelli's in 'La Filosofia delle Scuole Italiane,' 1875-76. Hartmann published in 1872 an anonymous refutation of his own principles and hypotheses—'Das Unbewusste vom Standpunkt der Physiologie und Descendenztheorie.'

Frauenstädt is, among pessimists, the writer most distinguished by good sense. His 'Briefe uber die Schopenhauerische Philosophie' (1854) and his 'Neue Briefe'

(1876) are valuable as expositions and apologies; while works like his 'Das Sittliche Leben,' 'Blicke in die intel. phy. und mor. Welt,' &c., have very considerable merits which are independent of their relation to a system. In the 'Revue Philosophique' for May and July, 1876, there is an essay by Hartmann on "Schopenhauer et Frauenstädt."

Bahnsen, to whom reference is made in the lecture, has stated his views in 'Zur Philosophie der Geschichte' (1872), 'Das Tragische als Weltgesetz' (1877), and other works. See regarding him Hartmann's "Un nouveau disciple de Schopenhauer" in the 'Rev. Phil.,' Nos. 1 and 2 for 1876.

Mainländer in his 'Philosophie der Erlösung' (1876) rivals even Bahnsen as an apostle of despair. Says Wundt: "A gloomy melancholy pervades this work, which shows clearly how short a step it is from Schopenhauer's Will-manifestations to a system of mystical emanation. God, it is here set forth, was the original Unity of the world, but He is so no longer, since the world broke up into a multiplicity of particular things. God willed that *nought* should be, but His essence prevented the immediate coming to pass of nothingness; the world meanwhile behoved to fall asunder into a multiplicity, whose separate entities are all clashing with one another as they struggle to arrive at the state of nothingness. It is not, therefore, the Will-to-live, as Schopenhauer said, that maintains the change of phenomena, but the Will-to-die; and this is coming ever nearer to its fulfilment, since in the mutual struggle of all things the sum-total of force grows ever less. In the view of this author, the highest moral duty is that negation of existence which would cut short the unlimited

continuance of individual life in the future by the cessation of all sexual connection."

Taubert, Du Prel, Venetianer, Volkelt, Noirè, Von Hellwald, and various other writers in Germany, adhere by slighter or stronger ties to the pessimist philosophy.

The best French work on pessimism is Caro's 'Pessimisme au xix^e^. Siècle' (1878).

Pessimists dwell, of course, on the sad realities of suffering and death. As to these facts I may refer my readers to the ingenious considerations by which Dr Macvicar endeavours to show that they are not to be regarded as limitations of power, wisdom, or goodness in the Creator. See his 'Sketch of a Philosophy,' Pt. iv. ch. x. This remarkable and profound work has not obtained the attention which it merits.

Note XXXIV., page 341.

Histories of Pantheism.

M. Emile Saisset's 'Essai de Philosophie Religieuse' is, on the whole, the ablest work on pantheism. A good English translation of it, under the title of 'Modern Pantheism,' was published by T. and T. Clark of Edinburgh, in 1863. It does not treat of oriental or classical pantheism. It consists of two parts. The first part contains seven historical studies or treatises with these titles: (1) Theism of Descartes; (2) God in the system of Malebranche; (3) Pantheism of Spinoza; (4) God in the system of Newton; (5) Theism of Leibnitz; (6) Scepticism of Kant; and (7) Pantheism of Hegel. A common

aim connects and unifies these treatises—namely, the endeavour to trace the development and to test the worth of the pantheistic notion of Deity. The second part is composed of nine meditations on the following topics: (1) Is there a God? (2) Is God accessible to reason? (3) Can there be anything but God? (4) God the Creator; (5) Is the world infinite? (6) Providence in the universe; (7) Providence in man; (8) The mystery of suffering; and (9) Religion. The fifth meditation is the most questionable in its reasoning. M. Saisset contends that the infinity of God implies the infinity of the created universe, but only a relative infinity; or, in other words, illimitable extension in time and space. His chief argument for the conclusion is that there is no proportion between a finite creation and an infinite Creator, and hence that the creation must be relatively infinite in order to be worthy of the Creator. Obviously, however, if the argument be good at all, it is good for more than this conclusion. There is no proportion between absolute and relative infinity. If a finite creation cannot be worthy of an absolutely infinite Creator, neither can a relatively infinite creation be worthy of Him; but creation must be an effect completely equal to and exhaustive of its cause; or, in other words, pantheism, against which M. Saisset has so ably contended, must be true. There is a criticism of M. Saisset's work in Dean Mansel's 'Letters, Lectures, and Reviews.'

The 'Essai sur le Panthéisme' (1841), by the Abbé Maret, is a work much inferior to M. Saisset's; but it contains a considerable amount of information, and its reasoning is often judicious and conclusive. It was very favourably received by the Roman Catholic clergy of France, one of its leading ideas being that a denial of

the doctrine of the Roman Catholic must inevitably lead to pantheism. This notion was admirably exposed by Saisset in an article, "De la Philosophie du Clergé," published in his 'Essais sur la Philosophie, et la Reli gion au xix^{e}. Siècle,' (1845).

In the 10th volume of the 'Memoirs of the Royal Society of Göttingen' there is a Latin dissertation—De ortu et progressu Pantheismi inde a Xenophane Colophonio primo ejus auctore usque ad Spinozam Commentatio—by the laborious German historian of philosophy, J. G. Buhle. G. B. Jäsche's 'Pantheismus nach seinen verschiedenen Hauptformen, seinen Ursprung und Fortgange,' &c. (1826), is a three-volumed work of no great merit.

The Rev. J. Hunt's 'Essay on Pantheism' (1866) is so good that one cannot but regret that it is not better. It is the result of very wide reading, but of too rapid reading. As a statement of the opinions of others it is, I think, thoroughly accurate; but obviously the author required more time than he allowed himself to form his own opinions, and to arrange and master the materials which he had collected. If Mr Hunt, now that he has admirably finished a still more laborious task, were again to take up the subject, he might, with comparative ease, produce by far the most satisfactory history of pantheism.

The anonymous 'General Sketch of the History of Pantheism,' in 2 vols., the first of which appeared in 1878, is well written, but not otherwise to be commended. The author's dislike of labour disqualifies him for historical work. He says that his sketch is "chiefly a compilation, taken more frequently from translations and abridgments of originals, than from the originals

themselves;" but, in reality, the first volume—the only one which I have examined—is chiefly a compilation from three books,—Maurice's 'Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy,' Lewes's 'History of Philosophy,' and Draper's 'Intellectual Development of Europe.' He has given an account of oriental pantheism apparently without reading even a single translation. His independence both of originals and translations as to Greek pantheism seems also to have been nearly complete.

Note XXXV., page 350.

Hindu Pantheism.

Besides the well-known works of Max Müller, Muir, and Monier Williams, A. Ludwig's 'Philosoph. und Relig. Anschauungen des Veda' (1875), and P. Asmus's 'Indo-Germanische Religion' (1875 and 1877), are to be recommended to those who wish to understand the thoughts which gave rise to the Vedas.

The first stage of the growth of the pantheistic philosophy of India out of its Vedic germ is that which is represented by the most ancient of the class of writings designated Upanishads. In eleven or twelve of these Upanishads the principles of the Vedanta philosophy are more or less explicitly contained. A very full account of this stage of the doctrine, supported by abundant citations from the originals, will be found in M. Regnaud's contributions to the 'Revue Philosophique' during the last three years. The Upanishads contain

merely the elements of the Vedantist philosophy. The work which sets before us its next stage consists of 555 aphorisms, known as the Vedanta or Brahma Sutras, and attributed to Vyāsa, called also Bādarāyana, who is supposed to have lived in or near the fifth century of our era. Here the doctrine is developed in a systematic form, and the objections of rival systems are combated. A summary of the teaching of these Sutras is given by Regnaud in 'Rev. Phil.,' No. 2, 1878. The epoch of commentators followed, one of whom, Sankara, obtained an extraordinary influence, and secured for the Vedanta doctrine a decided supremacy among the philosophies of India. The work which gives the clearest and most succinct exposition of the system at the time when it was completely developed, is that designated the Vedanta-Sara, or Essence of the Vedanta. Its author, Sadānanda-Togindra, is believed to have lived about the tenth century. An English translation of it by Roer was published at Calcutta in 1845.

In the Ramayana, Mahabharata, and Puranas, the pantheism of India is to be studied in alliance with its mythology. For a general view of these works see Monier Williams's 'Indian Wisdom.' Accounts of them, and translations from them, are numerous.

In none of the Hindu philosophies was the doctrine of creation admitted. The theists of India no less than its pantheists—those who affirmed no less than those who denied the personality of God — assumed the eternity of the substance of the world. Thus the ancient theistic treaties, edited and translated by Professor Cowell—the Kusumanjali—argues for the existence of a supreme personal Lord "from the existence of effects, from the combination of atoms, from the

support of the earth in the sky, from traditional arts, from belief in revelation, from the Veda, from its sentences, and from particular numbers;" but it takes for granted that material atoms existed from eternity. The reasoning by which the belief in creation is set aside by Hindu philosophers is ever substantially that which we find thus expressed in a Sutra of the Sankhya system: "There cannot be the production of something out of nothing; that which is not cannot be developed into that which is: the production of what does not already exist potentially is impossible; because there must of necessity be a material out of which a product is developed; and because everything cannot occur everywhere at all times; and because anything possible must be produced from something competent to produce it."

Note XXXVI., page 355.

Greek Pantheism.

Pantheism so pervades all Greek philosophy that the history of Greek pantheism must be studied in the history of Greek philosophy. Hegel, Zeller, Ferrier, Grote, and others, will here serve as guides. For the literature regarding the several philosophies Ueberweg may be consulted.

Parmenides gave his thoughts to the world in a poem, Περὶ Φύσεως, of which fragments remain, making up in all 153 lines. They are the chief source for a knowledge of his system. They have been edited in the 'Reliquiae' of Karsten and in the 'Fragmenta' of Mullach. The dialogue Parmenides in the 'Corpus Platonicum,' even

if a genuine work of Plato, is not an authority as to the teaching of the philosopher whose name serves as its title. There is a good French Monograph on Parmenides by M. Riaux (1840).

No Greek philosopher thought of God as truly creative, or of the universe as in its very substance the result of the Divine action. Aristotle, in affirming that the ancient philosophers believed the world to have been made, has frequently been supposed to have testified that they believed the universe to have been created out of nothing. But this is an undoubtedly incorrect interpretation. The assertion that a thing is made does not imply that nothing existed out of which it could be made. Many of the ancients attributed to the universe a beginning, and at the same time regarded matter as eternal. The origin of things which they described was their origin from matter, not the origin of matter. See this learnedly proved in a dissertation of Mosheim, "On Creation out of Nothing," in the third volume of his edition of Cudworth's 'Intellectual System.'

Those who, like Clement of Alexandria, Huet, Cudworth, &c., have maintained that Plato believed in creation *ex nihilo* have mistaken what he taught about the phenomenal world of sense—about body as possessed of forms and qualities—with what he taught about the primary matter which the world of bodies presupposes. Those who suppose him to have meant by the eternity of matter merely the eternal existence in the Divine Mind of the idea of matter, overlook that the idea of the universe can be no less eternal than that of matter, and that a Divine idea could never be conceived of as disorderly, malignant, disobedient to the Divine will, and the source of the evil and sin in the world. It is necessary

to admit that Plato held that beneath the perpetual changes of sensible phenomena there was an unchangeable subject, different from the Deity and the Divine ideas, existing in a sphere independent of temporal origination, not produced by the Divine will, yet required as the means and occasion of the manifestation of Divine intelligence in the organisation of the world.

Aristotle distinctly taught the eternity both of matter and of the universe, but he conceived of primary matter as a mere capacity,—not as an actual substantial existence, which necessarily implies a synthesis of matter and form, dependent on the action of an energising cause, which must be both an efficient and a final cause. "Matter, in the theory of Aristotle," says Sir Alexander Grant, "is something which must always be presupposed, and yet which always eludes us, and flies back from the region of the actual into that of the possible. Ultimate matter, or 'first timber' necessarily exists as the condition of all things, but it remains as one of those possibilities which can never be realised, and thus forms the antithesis to God, the ever-actual. From all this it may be inferred that Aristotle would have considered it very unphilosophical to represent Matter, as some philosophers of the present day appear to do, as having had an independent existence, and as having contained the germs, not only of all other things, but even of Reason itself, so that out of Matter Reason was developed. According to Aristotle, it is impossible to conceive Matter at all as actually existing, far less as the one independent antecedent cause of all things; and it is equally impossible to think of Reason as non-existent, or as having had a late and derivative origin."—Ancient Classics for English Readers, 'Aristotle,' pp. 167, 168.

The Stoic conception of the relation of God to the world is very similar to the Aristotelian. They are viewed as two distinguishable yet inseparable aspects of Being—two sides of the one all-comprehensive existence—two phases of the one actual substance. God is the productive energy, and matter is the ground or substratum on and in which this energy works. God is that by which, and matter is that through which, everything is; and in all things both coexist, neither pure spirit nor pure matter having actual existence.

Various reasons were given by the Greek philosophers for denying the creation of matter and for affirming its eternity. Their weakness is very ably shown in Pearson's work 'On the Creed,' Art. I., chap. v.

NOTE XXXVII., page 358

JORDANO BRUNO.

There never should have been any doubt entertained as to the indebtedness of Spinoza to Bruno; but since the discovery of the 'Brief Treatise' of the latter, it is possible only in the minds of those who are not competently informed. A single fact may be mentioned to show how the discovery has thrown light on the relationship.

Appended to the second chapter of the 'Brief Treatise' are two dialogues — the first between the personifications, Understanding, Love, Reason, and Desire; and the second between two interlocutors, Erasmus and Theophilus. The German critical historians of phil-

osophy have started a controversy as to whether these dialogues were written before, or after, or along with the rest of the treatise. As to the direct and immediate object of their inquiry, they seem to me to have done little more than raise a very thick cloud of dust, the reverse of helpful to clear vision; but they have brought out one important fact—viz., that the second and longer of these dialogues, which is occupied with the idea of God, the fundamental idea in Spinoza's system, may be almost composed, pieced together, from sentences of Bruno. That there were many general resemblances between the doctrine of Spinoza and of the celebrated Neapolitan pantheist—that there were even some resemblances so special that they could only be accounted for by the later thinker having received from the earlier—had already been perceived; but the fact now mentioned has naturally led to a great deal of renewed and minute inquiry in this direction. The consequence has been that Spinoza has been ascertained to have absorbed Bruno not less than Descartes.

On Bruno, see Chr. Bartholmèss, 'Jordano Bruno,' 2 tom. (1846-47), and Domenico Berti, 'Vita di Giordano Bruno' (1868). There are two instructive articles on his philosophy by Prof. Barach in the 13th vol. of the 'Philosophische Monatshefte.' His Italian works have been edited by Wagner, and some of his Latin works by Gfrörer.

There is a good 'Histoire du Panthéisme Populaire au Moyen Age et au Seizième Siècle,' by Auguste Jundt.

NOTE XXXVIII., page 375.

SPINOZA.

The discovery first of letters of Spinoza and then of the 'Brief Treatise, concerning God, Man, and Human Happiness,' has recently given a fresh stimulus to the study of his writings. It has brought into the foreground the questions, What were the sources of his philosophy? and, How did it grow up in the mind of its author? It has lighted the way to the answers.

As regards the inquiry into the sources of his doctrine, here, as everywhere else in the history of philosophy, the result of investigation has been proof of the falsity and shallowness of the notion of Hegel that philosophies have succeeded one another in a single linear series, like beads on a string, or Indians in a file, or like a straight line of buckets, each lesser destined to be emptied into a bigger in front of it. Here, as everywhere else, it has been found that the history of philosophy is not in the least like a single thread, but is rather like a very broad web; and that a great man does not hang on to a particular other great man, but rather to the whole past and the whole present. Another result is that Spinoza has been ascertained to have borrowed far more from others than was supposed. It has taken long to make out, even approximately, the extent to which he was indebted to others, because, like most writers of his age, he very seldom gives a reference to authors who had preceded him; when he does refer to them, it is generally to indicate dissent from some of their views. The result ascertained was, however, one which might

have been anticipated, and which will lower no reasonable man's estimate of Spinoza's ability. The vast system which he constructed, viewed as a whole, is one of the most original which the entire history of philosophy presents. It certainly would have been neither so vast nor so original had the architect attempted to make his bricks for himself.

In the previous note I have mentioned that Spinoza has been shown by the recent investigations to have owed not a little to Bruno. It must be added that he has been proved beyond all doubt to have derived far more from authors of his own race than had been supposed. He will never be understood by any one who forgets that he was by birth and training a Jew; that the first and most powerful influences which acted on his mind were Jewish; that he knew the Hebrew Scriptures from his youth; that he was early initiated into the study of the Talmud; that he had become conversant even before he left school with the writings of the famous Jewish scholars and thinkers who lived in France, Spain, North Africa, &c., during the middle ages. This has often been practically forgotten, however, owing to the want of Jewish learning which exists among Gentiles. A working knowledge of Hebrew is one of the rarest accomplishments among Gentile philosophers. Hence, had the Jews themselves not come to the rescue, we would probably still have been ignorant of the closeness and comprehensiveness of the relation between Spinoza and earlier Jewish thinkers. But this they have done, and the works of Franck and Munk, Joël and Mises, Bernays, Benemozegh, and Jarackewsky, &c., have to a great extent laid bare those roots of Spinozism which were fixed in Jewish soil. They have amply proved that, to be

conceived of rightly, he must be viewed as connecting and combining two great developments of thought—an Eastern and a Western, a Jewish and a Gentile; that nothing was more natural than that a Jew, situated as he was, should have been the founder of Rationalism; that he founded it mainly by combining, developing, and organising the ideas and principles of a long series of Jewish Biblical students; and that he also derived many of the elements and doctrines of his speculative system from Jewish sources.

The political theory of Spinoza, which he expounds in a special treatise, is in the main derived from Hobbes, whose 'De Cive' and 'Leviathan' acquired from their first publication great celebrity on the Continent. Spinoza refers to Hobbes, but only slightly, and in his usual way of indicating dissent. The differences between the two authors are not inconsiderable, and are interesting; but the similarities are far more numerous. Spinoza was an able political thinker, but much less so than Hobbes, and he rather modified the political theory of Hobbes than formed one of his own. The German historians of the progress of political science decidedly err when they place him in this department on a level with the Englishman.

The discovery of Spinoza's indebtedness to the authors mentioned here led some to underestimate the influence exercised on him by Descartes. They have avoided the error of regarding Spinozism as an exaggerated or corrupted Cartesianism only to fall into that of denying essential connections between the two systems. The latter error is as great as the former. Nothing has come to light to justify it. In some respects the recently discovered compositions show even more clearly than those

previously published how great were Spinoza's obligations to Descartes. For instance, his account of the affections in the 'Brief Treatise' follows Descartes almost slavishly; while his theory of the affections in the 'Ethics' so little resembles the theory out of which it was developed, that he can speak of Descartes as having merely exhibited in treating of the passions "his own singular ingenuity and acuteness." There is no doubt that Spinoza received from Descartes the definition of substance, such a conception of two substances derived from and dependent on God—viz., spirit or thought, and matter or extension—as was capable of easy conversion into the conception of their being merely affections of one infinite substance, and other notions of the utmost significance in his system. It only requires to be remembered that these notions entered into a mind already possessed with others which necessarily and powerfully influenced them. There is no doubt that he received from Descartes the mathematical method of philosophical exposition. It only requires to be remembered that this method was not essential to his philosophy, and was only employed by him after his system had been substantially constituted; that the secret of his doctrine must not be sought for in the mathematical method, or in any "particular mathematical image."

The recent discoveries also show clearly that Spinoza's system was very slowly and gradually developed, and passed through various phases in its author's mind before it was elaborated into the shape which it assumes in the 'Ethics.' It is true that Spinoza died at the early age of forty-four, and that his 'Ethics' were ready for the press two years before his death; but the 'Brief Treatise,' which traverses almost the whole ground afterwards

surveyed in the 'Ethics,' was certainly written not less than seventeen years before his death, and probably more; so that fifteen years at least, and perhaps twenty or twenty-one years, intervened between the first written sketch and the final form of the 'Ethics,' during the whole of which time the strenuous and incessant work of Spinoza's life was the elaboration of a philosophy of which all the main features and essential principles were apprehended by him from the commencement. The 'Brief Treatise' and the 'Ethics' are the two extreme terms in the growth of the philosophy of Spinoza; and although in the course of that growth scarcely a single thought escaped modification, still, as the growth had been a continuous and consistent self-development, even its two extreme stages correspond in all their features as the countenance of the adult man to that of the child. It is not yet possible, however, to trace clearly and certainly the process of growth from the one of these terms to the other. It has not yet even been determined beyond doubt in what order the intervening works were composed. In the absence of direct testimony this can only be done by careful examination of their contents,—by a delicate, subtle, subjective kind of criticism, very apt to lead different inquirers to different and discordant results. In fact, the order of the composition of the works has to be determined from the course of the development of the thought, and the course of the development of the thought from the order of the composition of the works, with no external help except what is furnished by the letters arranged and studied chronologically. There are internal grounds for supposing that the fragment on the "Improvement of the Mind" was written immediately after the 'Brief Treatise,' the 'Theologico-Political Trea-

tise' next in order, then the 'Exposition of Cartesianism and Metaphysical Reflections,' and so that these represent the successive stages through which the thought of Spinoza has to be traced in its progress from the time when it referred everything to the unity of nature to the time when it referred everything to the unity of substance —from the 'Brief Treatise' to the 'Ethics;' but the reasons for arranging these works in the order indicated are merely probabilities, and some of them very feeble probabilities.

The literature regarding Spinoza is enormous. For a general view of it consult Ueberweg's 'History of Philosophy,' vol. ii. pp. 56-60 (Eng. tr.) and, if still fuller information is desired, Van der Linde's 'B. Spinoza Bibliographie' (1871). The recently published monograph of Theodore Camerer—'Die Lehre Spinoza's'—is an extremely thorough and able work. The same may be said of the treatises of F. Pollock, Dr Martineau, and Principal Caird. The best English translation of the works of Spinoza is that of R. H. M. Elwes, in 2 vols, London, 1883.

Note XXXIX., page 377.

Modern German Pantheism.

In my 'Philosophy of History in Europe' I have given some account of the philosophies of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, and literary references which may be useful to those who are engaged in their study.

The collected edition of Fichte's work by his son is in eight volumes. His 'Popular Writings' have been translated into English by Dr William Smith; his 'Science

of Knowledge' and 'Science of Rights' by A. E. Kroeger. His philosophy is ably described in Kuno Fischer's 'Geschichte der Neuern Philosophie,' Bd. v., in Harms' 'Philosophie seit Kant,' and in the special works of Busse and Löwe, &c. The best account, perhaps, of his religious doctrine is Fr. Zimmer's 'Joh. Gottl. Fichte's Religionsphilosophie' (1878).

The complete edition of Schelling's works is in fourteen volumes. There is a careful exposition of the successive modifications of his doctrine of the Absolute in the two last articles of the second volume of Hoffmann's 'Philosophische Schriften.' Several of his writings have been translated in the 'Journal of Speculative Philosophy,' edited by W. T. Harris.

The complete edition of Hegel's works is in eighteen olumes. Haym and Rosenkranz have treated of his e from very different points of view. There is an nglish translation of his 'Logic' by Wallace; of his Philosophy of History' by Sibree; and of his 'Phenonenology of Spirit,' 'Propaedeutik,' and parts of his 'History of Philosophy,' in the 'Journal of Speculative Philosophy.' Cabot's article "Hegel" in the 'North American Review,' April 1868, and Dr Hutchison Stirling's "Secret of Hegel," may be mentioned. Also Prof. A. Seth's 'Hegelianism and Personality,' 1887.

The various recent phases of modern German pantheism have been perhaps nowhere more minutely delineated than in the volumes of Hoffmann's 'Philosophische Schriften.'

Note XL., page 379.

Modern French Pantheism.

The philosophy of Cousin has been treated of by Damiron, by Alaux, by Secretan, by Janet, &c. In my 'Historical Philosophy in France' I have examined what may be held to be the pantheistic principles and consequences involved in his theory of history. On the question whether he can be correctly described as a pantheist or not, see Dr Henry's preface to the fourth edition of his translation of the 'Elements of Psychology' (N. Y., 1856), and an article of Dr Hodge, entitled "The Princeton Review and Cousin's Philosophy," reprinted from the 'Princeton Review' in the 'Brit. and For. Ev. Rev.,' vol. v., No. xvii. (1856).

The Saint-Simonian religion and polity rested on the pantheistic conception that God is all that is, and that matter and spirit are not separate existences, but the two sides or aspects of the Divine substance. On this subject, see pp. 58-68 of the previously mentioned 'Étude' of M. Ferraz.

In M. Caro's 'L'Idée de Dieu' the views of M. Renan and of M. Vacherot regarding God are subjected to a thorough and decisive criticism.

Note XLI., page 379.

Modern English Pantheism.

Pantheism is advocated by Mr Charles Bray in "Illusion and Delusion; or, Modern Pantheism *versus* Spiritualism," and by F. W. J., in 'Spiritual Pantheism.' Both tracts are undated, and both were published at the press of the late Mr Scott of Norwood.

In Mr J. Allanson Picton's 'Mystery of Matter' (1873) there is an eloquent essay on what is called "Christian Pantheism;" and in the 'Sermons' (1875) of the late Rev. Peter S. Menzies of Melbourne there is an eloquent discourse bearing the same title. This so-called "Christian pantheism" is represented as distinct from, and opposed to, the pantheism "which absorbs in a mechanically ruled, eternal universe the free personality of God," and the pantheism "which represents moral good and moral evil as equally agreeable to God, and equally the direct creation of His will."

Much has been written about the pantheism of Carlyle. Some would, perhaps, class Matthew Arnold as a pantheist, in virtue of his faith in a "stream of tendency which makes for righteousness."

Pantheism has been unfortunate in Britain; indeed it has not been presented in a form worthy of discussion. It has displayed itself to rather more advantage in America. See 'Transcendentalism in New England: A History.' By Octavius B. Frothingham (New York, 1876).

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